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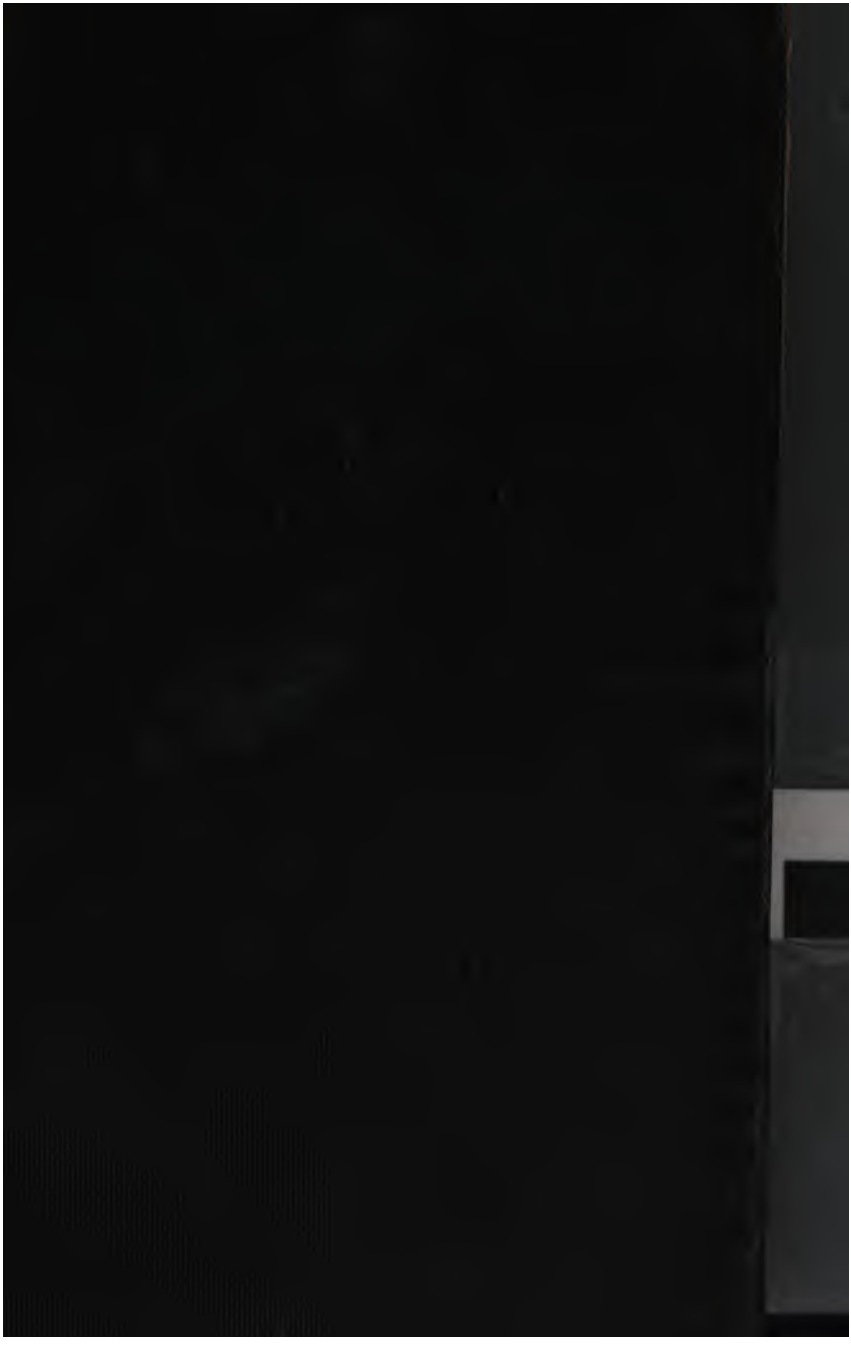

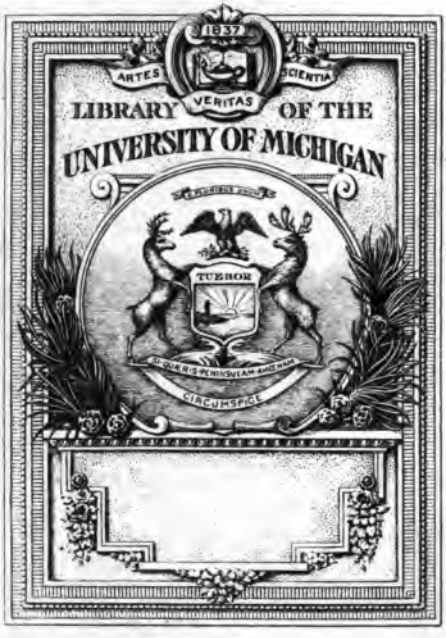
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MORTMAIN

THE WORLD

'D THOMAS KELLY

BY
ARTHUR TRAIN
Author of "The Goldfish," etc.

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To

FREDERICA PULITZER

Replace
Wahr
12-15-26
1917

THE WORLD AND THOMAS KELLY

I

THE day Tom Kelly was born the "Old Elm" on Boston Common was struck by lightning. This being one of those phenomena of nature denominated "acts of God" by the insurance companies, the correct inhabitants of the ancient New England capital were somewhat in doubt as to whether to consider the occurrence a "deliberately unfriendly act" on the part of the Deity, or to regard it merely as an uncalled-for and rather ill-advised eccentricity. However, by this fact the well-informed reader can fix with accuracy the date upon which this story opens.

There was doubtless no significance in the coincidence of the accident to the historic Tree with that other quite common and natural event, which had taken place earlier in the day in one of the upper chambers of a seventeen-foot brick house on Newbury Street, in the district of "made" land known as the "Back Bay." So far as Boston was concerned, the advent of the infant Tom attracted no more attention than did the exit of Dr. Tucker

from the Kelly domicile. Frankly, it created none at all. Dr. Tucker was as much of an institution in Boston as the "Old Elm," and not to have been guided into the world by his skilled, though somewhat effeminate hand, would have been, indeed, to argue oneself unborn. But this fate, at any rate, Tom escaped, and his arrival was in every respect as punctilious as the local requirements demanded.

As Dr. Tucker came neatly down the small winding stairs he was waylaid in the tiny hall by the elder Kelly, a short, red-headed, aggressive-looking person, who had been impatiently biting his mustache for upward of an hour in the adjacent dining-room.

"A beautiful little boy!" smiled Dr. Tucker brightly. "And mother is doing nicely!"

The red-headed man mumbled something that might have been taken either as an imprecation or a rendition of thanks. As a matter of fact, he felt abashed that a man of Dr. Tucker's well-known social position should see him and his in their nakedness. For Mrs. Dr. Tucker had been a Robbins! Had Dr. Tucker been called Dr. Jones or Dr. Watts he, Kelly, would have slapped him upon the nearest adjacent part of his anatomy, and offered him a slug of whiskey. But in the face of the husband of a Robbins he was dumb. There was disgusting atmosphere of benignity about this refined gentleman who condescended so efficiently to the domestic exigencies of the Kellys, and deig-

to send them a substantial bill afterward for his services.

Dr. Tucker did not shake hands with Mr. Kelly, for he did not care to cultivate the merely social side of his profession. So he nodded patronizingly to him, lifted his tall silk hat lightly from the black walnut horror that filled one entire side of the front hall of the house, reluctantly grasped his small black bag, and tripped down the four front stone steps to the brick sidewalk. At the bottom he stopped.

"I will return this afternoon," he remarked crisply to Kelly, who had followed him out and was standing in the sunshine on the top of the steps. Kelly nodded.

"All right," he answered in a slightly hostile tone. For some unaccountable reason he would have liked to accelerate the doctor's progress with a kick.

Dr. Tucker, in that rarefied aura always surrounding the successful men of New England, continued on his way down the street, totally unconscious of the feelings which he had so innocently stimulated in the heart of the man who would later send him a check. He had a case coming on down nearer the Public Garden, and a couple of calls to make on the way up on ladies who were doing as well as could be expected.

Kelly turned slowly indoors, observing with rage the blue iridescence of the silver-plated, but neglected, bell-knob which defiantly told all the world that at "23" dwelt "Kelly." He had hesitated a

long time before making up his mind whether or not to put his name on that bell. It was bad enough to be named Kelly in Boston without flaunting it in the faces of the dapper gentlemen and correctly sedate females who hastened so assiduously by, as if deeming it quite improper to "go down-town" merely for the pleasure of it. Then the faint, diluted traces of Irish in his blood had cried out (the Kellys had come over in 1635), and he had told Mr. Putnam, the "Glazier and Hanger," to engrave the name in letters so big that neither King George nor anybody else would need spectacles to read it. For a while after that he had felt quite John Hancockian.

Mr. Putnam in due course had engraved the said plate, and had duly affixed it to the stone jamb of the vestibule of the house, connecting the knob or "pull" with a copper wire—exposed on the inside of the vestibule—which ran through the interior complexities of the floors and walls of the dwelling until it reached the kitchen, where it joined itself to a dangling bell, one of a dozen dangling bells, on a strip of wood near the ceiling. When anybody jerked the knob on the outside of the house, the energy this generated was transferred along the wire to the bell in the kitchen so that it jangled loudly. Likewise, it must be confessed, did a few of the other bells—but an intelligent cook quickly learned to discriminate sympathetically among the parlor, dining room, bedroom, and front door-bells. In reality only the front door-bell ever jangled, since the "second

girl was always up-stairs, anyway, and you could not expect the cook, even if earning four dollars and a quarter a week, to come traipsing up three flights of stairs to see what was wanted.

In Boston in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the surname of every sober, decent man, provided he had reached the social status at which it was uttered at all and not merely ignored, was prefixed by a "mister." "Mister" that man was called—*Mister* Tighe, *Mister* Higgins, *Mister* Doyle —whether plumber, butcher, hack-driver, horse-car conductor, grocery-man, or remover of garbage. The Declaration of Independence, erroneously assumed to have been composed by a Bostonian, or one at least connected by blood with Boston, had contained the sacrosanct assertion that all men had been created equal. However they might have been created, all Boston knew that they were equal no longer, but being entitled to "mister" at birth, the handle could not easily be separated thereafter from a vessel no matter how cracked or weak. Moreover, to speak of a policeman as Mister Grady, or to a postman as Mister O'Toole, tended to keep him at a distance otherwise impossible, and as was proper. Imagine a Boston lady or gentleman in 1885 addressing a bluecoat as "Grady"! It would have instantly put him upon an impossibly familiar footing! So all, without exception, when engaging one of those strange and dangerous artifices of man which even to-day stand at the corners of the Back Bay behind impossibly stiff and rheumatic cab-

horses, addressed the owner as Mr. Timmins or Mr. McCarthy. They may do so still. I fear not.

Kelly, senior, entered the vestibule, mechanically wiping his feet on the threadbare cocoa-mat inside, and tried the inner door. The catch had snapped. In his annoyance at Dr. Tucker he had foolishly locked himself out. Thus he was compelled to retrace his steps and ring the door-bell, whose tintinnabulations made themselves dimly heard through the laundry window, which opened into the "grass-plot" on the left of the steps. There was no grass in the plot. In default thereof it was adorned with several pieces of string, some bits of paper, two clay marbles, a scattering of incipient burdock-bushes, and a large hole where various wandering dogs had scratched a tribute to cleanliness.

Kelly had yanked the knob viciously and the bell jangled a long, long time with unexpected penultimate drops of sound. Meantime the eye of the master of the house savagely swept over the bare earth of his "front grass-plot." He was always intending to have it fixed up by Mr. Calderone, the "Flower-Place" (hyphenated) man, over on Boylston Street. Everything in Boston in the eighties was capitalized and hyphenated, thus gaining a double dignity. He mentally picked up the string and the scraps of paper, filled the canine excavations, and then—the master himself descended and picked the two marbles. A reminiscent softening made itself apparent about his mouth and nose. He dus

the marbles off on his trousers leg and placed them in his right-hand pocket.

"They'll do for a starter!" he thought. Even then his vision flew to rocking-horses, tin soldiers, stamp-books, hoops, bicycles—all the things that he had never had himself. With a changed expression he leaped up the four steps and stood excitedly waiting.

A heavy pounding, like the tread of an ox or a small river-horse, was shortly audible. Then the door rattled and was pulled violently open from inside, and in the opening, in a militant attitude, appeared the stern presence of the Kelly cook. Her skirts were gathered up in some mysterious fashion, displaying the scallops around the tops of her worn kid shoes, and her sleeves were rolled back to the elbows. Her calico dress was open at the neck, which, gaunt as an eagle's, supported a strongly marked and finely featured face, where glowed dominant will, industry, and self-respect. Above the woman's deep gray eyes the thin gray hair was drawn straight back into a grotesque knob at the back of her head. She was a typical "Biddy," but the kind of "Biddy" that has been the mother of many a statesman.

"Begorra!" she exclaimed, panting, "'tis the masther! And me up to me elbows in the suds! Whereever have ye bin, wid a new little gintleman born this five minutes ago, as I heard meself from upstairs tru the spakin'-tube? And the missus doin' fine, and whatever do yez think, sor—'tis the weight of it I'm tellin' ye——"

"Yes?" said Mr. Kelly inquiringly, as he pushed by her. "What was the weight, Bridget?"

It was characteristic of Dr. Tucker to omit the mention of trifling details.

"Lawd save us! 'Twas eleven pound!" cried the cook, "and the missus no bigger than me little sister Annie!"

"Eleven pounds!" gasped Mr. Kelly. "Eleven pounds!" And then for the first time he smiled.

As the reader may perhaps have already divined, the Kellys were *of* Boston, but not precisely *in* it. Brahmin social refinements and their reflexes, particularly those so intricate and complex as involve the "Back Bay" in their tangles of heredity and relationship, are past unravelling. For Kelly the elder had been born on Mt. Vernon Street in a house occupied by Kellys for many generations, and numbered among his ancestors a couple of generals in the Continental and Colonial forces, a governor of the State, and a judge of the Supreme Court.

Yet in spite of Mr. Kelly's unimpeachable family tree, and the genealogical peaches and plums it bore among its branches, he was no more to his fellow citizens of Boston than if he had been born in Roxbury, and the son of a Presbyterian. For the era of which we write was the era of the invasion of Boston by the Irish, an invasion which, however much it did eventually for the country at large, vastly embarrassed the hidebound patricians of the Back Bay, and shook the temple of republican tradition to its very foundations. Aforetime it had

been enough for one or two of the old families to announce who should or should not be mayor, alderman, or senator, and the stately dignity of an untainted past was essential to one who would condescend to elevate public office. Only those could govern or represent their fellow citizens who had been baptized in the blood of the Pilgrim Fathers, or of the worthies of Salem. But the advent of the Irish was like a permanent invasion of the Goths, brutally sweeping before it every cherished habit and custom of the plebian mind which had rendered the social dictatorship of the old families so despotic. With shocking disregard of all finer feeling, and with impudent independence, these new citizens proceeded to choose their own leaders, erect their own cross-crowned churches and cathedrals, and elect as many as they could of the officers of the municipality, until the old families drew their petticoats and other apparel about their thin legs, and with horror declared that the Irish horde, if unchecked, would become rulers of the country, and make it tributary to the Pope of Rome.

Thus, merely to bear a Hibernian name, however distinguished, was just cause for the ignoring of its owner by the haughty and resentful patricians of Beacon Hill and the West End, who viewed him with suspicion, as possibly implicated in some deep-laid Fenian conspiracy for the subversion of the national government. To be Irish, even in the tenth degree, was sufficient reason for being socially damned in Boston in the seventies and

left shivering in the chilly atmosphere of the unrecognized.

Moreover, it was distinctly bad form for one thus "born on the wrong side of the street" to call attention to the circumstance in any way whatsoever. To do so was an infraction of the Christian duty, to exist uncomplainingly in that state of life into which it had pleased God to call him; and to admit frankly that one was an outcast and to defy the social edict by open indifference was an unpardonable offense to Boston's sense of decency. Now Kelly, senior, not only admitted that he had been "born on the wrong side of the street," but he astonished and terrified his female relations, including his wife, by announcing that he did not care. Not to care was felt in the Back Bay to be the supreme and final touch of vulgarity. Those who were not in the Blue Book endeavored to show their innate breeding and knowledge of the world by admitting the propriety of the social verdict against them. Had Kelly been a truly nice man he would have accepted gratefully such crumbs of recognition as fell from the social table.

But Kelly had done more. He had, in flagrant violation of the eugenics of Boston, married a girl who had been born in Chelsea. This, so to speak, finished Kelly. He had been an ambitious young fellow, occupying a junior position in the office of a genteel old lawyer, who lived near the State House, in a red brick mansion with a cellar full of cobweb-covered bot-

antique Madeira and Medford rum. With the name of Kelly, even spelled with an extra "e," he could not aspire to a partnership, but he might in time have inherited the practice, had he not fallen in love with the daughter of a threadbare commission merchant, who resided in a socially unmapped wilderness, and thereby sealed the doom of his professional career so far as old Squire Mason was concerned.

"Dammit, sirs! It shows the fellow has no taste!" exploded the old autocrat over his dinner-table on learning the news; and from that moment Kelly's future became dim. Had he sought to induce one of the cold virgins of the Back Bay to become Mrs. Kelly, he could not have been blamed, poor fellow—but to marry some woman from Chelsea! Or had he sought marital happiness in Jamaica Plain, Dorchester, or even South Boston, allowances might have been made for the vagaries of Eros—but Chelsea! Moreover, he had red hair, which called attention to these things.

So Kelly, in spite of his genuine blue blood, his excellent education at Harvard College, his eminent ability as a pleader and expounder of common law, was regarded by his fellows as more or less of a failure, or at least a person of no particular importance one way or another, and having married the lady of his heart he hung out a shingle for himself and plodded along the legal path alone. As time went on, he attracted a few clients, also socially unknown, and gradually built up a practice which

enabled him to lease the brick house on Newbury Street, in which the momentous event heretofore recorded had just occurred. He was a man of common sense and saw clearly that he was the victim of a narrowness of social vision in others, but he loved his native city, and would have languished elsewhere. He was too proud to belong to any but the best clubs, and so belonged to none; and he nursed his grudge to this extent, that not being invited to the best houses he did not care to go anywhere. It was hardly to be wondered at that he felt no enthusiasm about introducing another Kelly to the unreceptive society in which he lived. This explains his lack of exhilaration on receiving the doctor's announcement, and his first feeling of subdued resentment toward that worthy man. Sometimes he would have liked to explode a bomb in the middle of the Boston Public Garden and rudely shock the smug self-satisfaction of his fellow citizens. Had he lived he might have done so. But he did not survive to make himself thus vulgarly conspicuous. Two years after Tom's birth he caught a chill while walking home in the March rain across the "Common," and in less than a week expired of double pneumonia. A doctor of irreproachable social antecedents officiated at his last moments.

II

"If he isn't better by five o'clock I'm going to send for Aunt Eliza," said his mother, laying Tom, aged three, back in his crib, where he continued to wriggle and squirm in defiance of all propriety.

"That'll be good, mum," agreed Maggie, the nurse who had attended Tom since his birth and knew every symptom of infantile ailments. "She'll be after bringin' some more seeds, I'm thinkin'."

The seeds referred to were pumpkin-seeds, an infallible remedy in Aunt Eliza's opinion for certain minor disorders, and were carefully preserved by her in a paper bag for her periodical visits. These and a liberal use of olive oil were all, his mother fondly believed, that preserved Tom from following his father promptly into the next world.

Aunt Eliza lived in South Boston—a day's journey, as Tom later discovered, by transferring horse-cars—and when she came over she usually spent the night. Being herself an Osgood, she had not regarded favorably her niece's alliance with a Kelly, but since the offender's death she had resumed diplomatic relations. She was Tom's earliest and most vivid impression—by no means a cheerful one—and for many years his ideas of womankind were tainted by the recollection of Aunt Eliza's

acrimonious visage in its ruffled cap, while, as a child, he assumed as a matter of course that the normal subjects of conversation between adult human beings were sickness, bereavement, and the proper conduct of funeral ceremonies. She was a vigorous, independent old party of seventy-six years, with a definiteness of opinion and a dominant character that at times entirely effaced her niece Mrs. Kelly, a weak, retiring lady who had never quite regained her self-possession after "marrying onto the Back Bay," and who, having no confidence in herself, leaned heavily on her strong-minded relative.

"I think you can light the gas now, Maggie," said Mrs. Kelly. "How does he seem to you?"

"Oh, sure, he's better. He ain't near so restless," reassured Maggie, as she fumbled for a sulphur match in the china pig on the mantelpiece. The gas ignited with a pop, and the room, which had been filled with shadows, became dimly illuminated.

It was the room in which Tom had been born, and everything in it gave evidence of the modest circumstances of his parents. The bed and bureau were of massive walnut—a wedding present, but the cheap Brussels carpet was threadbare and the heavily framed pictures were lithographs of dyin stags or of Biblical ladies going to the well or r turning from harvest. Christmas cards, chea calendars, and "ornaments" worked in worst adorned the tops of shelves, the mirrors, or dang from the gas-jets. An illuminated worsted sc

invited the reader to "Look unto me and be ye saved." One door led to the narrow main hallway and another to a dark and stuffy "dressing-room," which in turn communicated with a dank bathroom boasting a tin tub and a "set bowl."

Across the street could be seen a few palely glowing windows, and just then, a man with a brisk walk, and carrying a pole with a bulgy end, stopped at the lamp-post opposite, thrust the pole upward, fumbled with it mysteriously, and hastened off again, leaving the lamp behind him lighted.

"I've always wondered how he does that!" sighed Mrs. Kelly, smoothing back her hair and tucking away the loose wisps in a manner somehow suggesting that as Providence had not seen fit to impart to her that priceless knowledge it was perhaps a little wrong to speculate about the matter. Yet she had expressed exactly the same idea in just those words every night for the thirteen years of her married life while waiting for her husband to come home from the office. For she had been married thirteen years before Tom had arrived. And now that her husband was dead and Tom was three years old, she still continued to wonder about the gas-man.

"I wish I'd sent for the doctor," she added anxiously, while she pulled down the window-curtains. As Maggie McGee knew that she didn't wish anything of the sort, but that the remark was simply by way of making conversation, she did not vouchsafe an answer.

Most of Mrs. Kelly's remarks were of the same general nature—assertions of states of mind thrown out at random on the merest chance of entangling some sort of reply, a continual procession of mild remonstrances to the effect that whatever had been done should have been done differently, negative reflections upon the weather and the general self-conduct of nature.

She was about to hazard the thought that it was long past time for the newspaper to come, when a faint jangle from the lower regions caused both women to start with surprise.

"Well, I never! Who can *that* be!" exclaimed Mrs. Kelly.

"Who'd ever be comin' *this* hour!" echoed Maggie.

The pounding of Bridget's feet upon the back stairs smothered the dying tinkles of the bell, the chain rattled on the front door, and a medley of cries and ejaculations arose from below.

"I do believe it's Aunt Eliza!" gasped Mrs. Kelly. "She's come to spend the night! Run an' see if the bed in the spare room is made up."

Maggie hastily fled through the hall to the rear, while her mistress looked over the stairs.

"What *is* it, Bridget?" she called, for although she knew perfectly well what it was, she desired to make social capital of her subsequent astonishment.

"It's me, Caroline," came up from below in the raucous tones of Miss Osgood. "Such a time's I've had!"

"Gracious!" shouted Mrs. Kelly in accents of

hysteria. "What an hour! I should have thought you would have started earlier."

Miss Osgood paused breathless on the landing to allow the exchange of further amenities.

"Look out for that pie-shaped stair," called down her niece anxiously. "You know Miss Trollop slipped on it and rolled all the way down—and she three hundred pounds!"

Mrs. Kelly ignored the fact that she had communicated this same warning to Aunt Eliza every time she had ascended that flight of stairs for the last sixteen years.

Her aunt made no reply, and resumed her climb.

"Here," added Mrs. Kelly. "Wait while I light the hall gas!"

She rushed frantically back to the front room, secured a match and made a great display of trying to light up.

"Don't light it!" ordered Aunt Eliza. "We ain't goin' to set in the hall, be we?"

Mrs. Kelly with seeming regret blew out the match. She had had no real intention of lighting the hall gas. From motives of economy the halls were not lighted in the Kelly mansion—and Aunt Eliza knew it.

"Well—" she admitted, "I don't s'pose we *are*."

Then she embraced her aunt vigorously and gave her a loud smack on the left cheek. Miss Osgood emitted a kind of cluck and marched on toward the front room.

"I should have thought you would have taken

cold being out so late," said Tom's mother, following her.

"Such a time's I had gettin' here!" repeated Miss Osgood, with more than her usual importance. "I had to wait nearly forty minutes at the bridge!"

"Dear me!" replied her niece. "Let me take your shawl! I was just goin' to send for you."

Miss Osgood looked at her with feigned awe.

"Do you know," she said in a whisper. "Somethin' told me! I just knew it!"

She surrendered her shawl, disclosing a large, half-filled paper bag beneath.

"What's that?" inquired Mrs. Kelly politely.

"Punkin-seed," announced Aunt Eliza — "for Tom!"

III

TOM'S earliest recollections were of lying in his mother's arms and seeing the crescent moon across the housetops. But he did not remember his mother ever singing to him. Mrs. Kelly, poor lady, never sang anything—except hymns in a thin quaver. She took life far too seriously for that. To her Tom was a responsibility that left no vitality for playfulness or even the purr of mere comfort. She had been thirty when she married, she was forty-three when Tom was born, and she was now nearly fifty. Her girlhood had been a drab affair of a shabby genteel sort from which active sports had been excluded as vulgar. Any natural mirth she might have had as a child had long since succumbed to the apprehensions of her New England conscience. She did not really believe in a personal devil with a red tail, but she pretended to Tom that she did and felt herself in danger of hell fire because she did not. Dear, well-meaning lady! And though she loved Tom with a passionate devotion —was he not all she had on earth?—yet the restraint of her Puritan upbringing and the belief that life was so serious a matter deprived her of the ability to give any natural expression to her feelings and forced her to mask her real affection under a demeanor of self-conscious severity.

By day he lay in her lap in the same place, and instead of the moon, watched the little globules of light, reflected from the water standing on the tin roof of the bay window, dance on the ceiling. They danced and danced so jollily that he did not miss his mother's singing, and he would laugh with delight, and then his glance would stray to where a steel-engraved Madonna with great soulful eyes gazed down upon another baby, just like him, who lay in her arms—and beyond to where the red worsted motto urged him to "Look unto me and be ye saved"—from what?

These and the smell of things being boiled in an alcohol-lamp were what he remembered most in after-years. Gradually, however, he took notice of others—Aunt Eliza with her perennial bag of pumpkin-seeds, Fanny Trollop the dropsical lady who had made the pie-shaped stair famous by slipping on it, and Sarah the "second" girl. It never occurred to Tom in later years to wonder who the "first" girl was or whether there had ever been any. Certainly there had been none during his own brief existence.

Besides Aunt Eliza there were other aunts and female cousins who lived vaguely somewhere in the suburbs and who "came in on the cars" to spe the day and assist in the upbringing of Tom, l there were also a few decrepit and nondescript u related spinsters who were always referred to "Lizzie" this or "Flossie" that. Tom never kı who they were or where they came from. So

as he could ascertain there were no husbands pertaining to any of the aunts and cousins. They were very much alike, all of them—their aspect betraying an underlying resentment against society at large and an aggressive distrust of man; and they seemed to hold Caroline, Tom's mother, in a sort of contemptuous awe. Likewise they were very curious about Tom, and took part assiduously and enthusiastically at his bath and various rehabilitations.

In spite of the officious attentions of his mother's female relatives and her own well meaning, but highly unintelligent, efforts to safeguard him from the slightest exposure to the elements, Tom managed not only to survive, but also in what seemed a surprisingly short time to perform the miracle of self-locomotion. He had been oiled, dosed, physicked, bandaged, and bundled up at the slightest provocation, but, having inherited a robust constitution from the Kelly side of the family, managed somehow to achieve boyhood none the worse for the zealous care bestowed upon him save for a slight oversensitiveness to drafts. Saturday nights he was boiled in the bathtub and huddled off to bed, and if he sneezed he was wrapped in a blanket and rocked in front of the "register," as the opening of the hot-air furnace in his mother's room was called. These "registers" were a mystery and an unending source of amusement to Tom, for you could halloo down through their tunnels to the nether regions, or innocently drop into them unconsidered and never-to-be-recovered trifles belonging to the fe-

male wardrobe. When Eben, the negro choreman, had started a good fire the hot air would come out in a grand blast and you could hold up your handkerchief and imagine you were a ship at sea under full sail. And down in the front hall, where the register was flush in the floor and not in the wall, you could lay your silk muffler on it carefully and away it would go toward the ceiling, carried up on the column of air until it slid off sideways and fell in a crinkled heap on the carpet.

Every year, however, the placid routine of Tom's simple life was interrupted by the inevitable visit at the Newbury Street house of Uncle Ezra and Aunt Minerva Jenkins from Bridgeport, who came each spring, bringing a carpetbag worked in green worsted with a stag's head in yellow. Uncle Ezra was a very vivid memory indeed, for he had a face like a moose with a long thin nose overhanging his chin in extensions or eaves. Mrs. Kelly had the highest reverence for him, and also for his wife who was reputed to be the best housekeeper in Bridgeport, but Tom dreaded these visitations by reason of the additional gloom that pervaded the house while the worthies were there. During these periods Tom's mother always wore her Sunday clothes, even at breakfast, and asked Uncle Ezra to say grace, and after the meal was over they would all adjourn to the library and have family prayers, with Sarah the second girl, and Bridget the cook, lurking in a religiously hostile yet malevolently respectful m ner outside in the hall.

These family prayers were unabridged and complete in all respects, covering every department of human activity in this and foreign lands. "And we would especially ask thy attention, Oh Lord, to the benighted heathen of Tasmania and beseech thee to give them of thy grace!" and so on, or at least so it seemed to Tom, through Somaliland, Patagonia, and the whole geography. Uncle Ezra, who had a great reputation in Bridgeport as an exhorter, fascinated Tom to such an extent that he almost did not mind kneeling down so long on the hard floor, for he could see Uncle Ezra after he had exhausted the air in his lungs on the natives of South Australia, take a long, long breath, drawing in his flapper-like nostrils until he was quite distended, and begin again on the inhabitants of western Africa. He knew Uncle Ezra was a very holy man—for he never smiled.

Aunt Minerva was a pantomimic echo of her husband, and both acted as if they thought Tom did very wrong to be alive, and as if they were sure God was very angry with him. During this annual affliction Tom's mother assumed a regretful, pained manner toward him, as if to say that he would know some day what a terribly sad business this being "a child of God" was and be sorry for not realizing it sooner. They all murdered the joy of life and seemed forever doomed to participate in its attendant obsequies. Tom was convinced somehow that he was a miserable sinner and was ready to do all that he could to rectify the matter, but the manner of

his elders satisfied him that, do what he could, he would remain what he was—a worm.

It is impossible to gauge the far-reaching effect upon character of seemingly inconsequential influences. Tom's whole attitude toward religion in after-life was colored strongly by his recollections of Uncle Ezra and his wife, just as his attitude toward the world at large was quite naturally moulded by that of his mother. And one of his first reactions to this gloomy and depressing view of the disposition of Providence toward the inhabitants of the globe was to welcome eagerly the suggestion of a youthful agnostic that there was no reason to believe in any God at all or for attempting to carry out his mythical commandments. So successful were the Jenkinses in impressing Tom with his guilt of some undefined offense against the Almighty that not before his freshman year in college did he cease to have an instinctive fear of an imminent retribution from on high. This was accentuated by the frequent repetition of such phrases as "born in sin" and "children of wrath." He was informed that the "Old Adam" was in him somewhere. This made him very uneasy and most uncomfortable. He expected Adam to come popping out of him at almost any minute, just as Jonah had emerged from the whale. It was an unpleasant anticipation. And the idea that he would not only be visited with swift vengeance for any transgressions of his own in the future, but also, for some unexplained reason, for those of others in the dim past for which he could not in any way con-

ceive himself as responsible, made him secretly resentful. It was all most mysterious, but when he sought enlightenment from his mother and Aunt Eliza, the former only whispered, "Hush!" and held up a warning finger, while the latter remarked didactically: "Just hear the child—little boys mustn't ask about such things!"

"But *why* have I got to be saved?" wailed Tom. "I'd rather not be! Please don't let me be saved!"

Horrified, his mother pushed him from the room with instructions to go and play in the back yard, only not under any circumstances to ask questions of Bridget, who in spite of being a good woman was a follower of the Pope of Rome. Even if Bridget herself felt kindly toward him, said his mother, she would be powerless to save him from the rage of the Roman Catholics if once they were aroused against him. They were always "massacring" people. There was the "Massacre of St. Bartholomew" for example! No, Tom must never in the remotest way touch upon religion in talking with Bridget!

About Jews his mother seemed, curiously enough, to feel differently. In fact her attitude was almost friendly. Their crucifixion of the Saviour she apparently regarded as an error of judgment, to be overlooked under all the circumstances. The Bible was full of Jews—nothing but Jews in fact. Apparently you could not hate Jews without in a measure reflecting on the upper stratum of Scriptural

Society. This may have had something Tom's preference for not being saved. the Jews wouldn't be saved, but the Jews less were evidently rather superior. Whe Ezra and Aunt Minerva—he couldn't i joying eternity in their companionship, e were equipped with golden harps and clad raiment!

Tom, duly warned, discussed with Brid fore, only "fay-ries" and the value of and bottles. Yet Bridget did not suffer under the false lure of gold. Rather, w came into the kitchen she would impress the value of wisdom.

"Sure, 'tis better to be a great scholar Leary than a millyunaire," she would sa arms akimbo on her broad, powerful hips. the time I wisht I'd had an eddicati your books, Tom! Take an old woman it. Yer father knew his books, even if as much for yer mither. And 'crumbs wise'!"

Forthwith she would cross to the wall clock and remove from its nail a blue tin in which she preserved all the crumbs the by-products of her daily tasks. They crunchy, and delicious—white, graham, and Tom would dump them all out in the pastry-board and lap them up like Bridget would stand by admiringly. times wondered afterward if Bridg

the bread crumbs thus devoured would increase his mental capacities. She was indeed a wise old woman, albeit a superstitious one, yet it is highly probable that she did vaguely believe in some occult power in the crumbs which she so zealously treasured to make Tom wise. Do not many of us accept the well-known thesis that fish is good for the brain? And, if so, why not crumbs? However that may be, Tom never forgot her admonition, and when he ceased to rely upon the efficacy of bread crumbs *per se* as an intellectual stimulus, he realized the true significance of Bridget's doctrine and profited by it. Thus the old cook played her part, just as did Uncle Ezra and Aunt Minerva, in shaping Tom's ultimate character.

But Tom's religious experiences were not limited to Uncle Ezra's visits. Ever since the Kellys had, in the early years of their married life, moved to Newbury Street, they had rented a pew in the old stone church on Tremont Street, a few minutes' walk away, just across the Public Garden and the Common. On Sunday mornings in early spring, and even on clear days in winter after a light fall of snow, these walks were very pleasant and left with a sense of muscular relaxation when comortably settled among the red cushions of the ı- ked, mahogany-trimmed pews.

·] e church was a hundred years old, dark and k in bad weather, and the regular attendants ıd shifting, owing to the fact that stores and ›-buildings had completely enveloped the low,

ancient edifice, and the more fashionab
gations had in consequence moved on to les
sections of the Back Bay. It was partl
reason that Mrs. Kelly continued to go t
St. Agnes's she had the feeling that she wa
good as anybody.

The rector, an austere and unapproacl
son, who had once declined the office
coadjutor in a Western State, was conside
faithful of his congregation to be a man of r
qualities, spiritual and intellectual. He
formly spoken of as having made "gr
fices" to stay at St. Agnes's, and he hi
guilty of no oversight in doing what he
strengthen that impression. Everything
Agnes's was in keeping with the rector.
threadbare, eminently respectable, with a
ecclesiastical aristocracy and a percepti
of sanctity. This odor, as Tom discove
emanated from the decaying cloth of the
and cushions of the pews, which in some
been entirely worn away, exposing the ag
beneath. Its quality was heightened t
but noticeable degree by a suggestion
prayer and hymn books, the covers of w
going through a natural process of disint
damp umbrella placed in juxtaposi
crumbling piece of antique leather was
its effect. The first thing a visitor to
noticed was a sort of faint acrid gre
Tom never heard the word "chu

coincidently recalling this mysterious and characteristic odor. A "church" was to him a place that "smelled like St. Agnes's."

The Kelly pew was in the rear, at the very beginning of the main aisle, and in consequence, its sides and back were higher than the others. The elder Kelly had chosen it because of its low rent, and his widow had retained it. It was her only extravagance, for while it could hold six persons there were only two left to sit in it, and it gave her an innocent satisfaction, and filled her with a sense of modest proprietorship, to be able to beckon to the usher and hold up four fingers, indicating thereby that she could, if necessary, accommodate four strangers within her gates. The sides of the pew, being fully two feet higher than Tom's head, it was quite impossible for him either to see or hear anything unless he was allowed to stand upright upon the seat, but Mrs. Kelly did not regard it as proper for him to do this except during the hymns, and in consequence he was obliged to occupy himself as best he could during the anthem and sermon, when he usually crawled under the seat or drew pictures inside the covers of the older books.

Obviously some other small boy had once found the worship of the Almighty equally tedious, for there was an English hymnal, lying around, bearing date 1849, with the name "Warren Bradshaw" scrawled across the fly-leaf accompanied by what Tom considered a masterpiece of drawing, consisting of the profile of a man in whiskers and a

tall hat. Sunday after Sunday he sat and marvelled at Warren Bradshaw's artistic ability, wondering if he should ever be able to draw a human being with such a hat and whiskers. During hymns Tom stood on the seat and watched the heads of the congregation; the rest of the time he lay on his back or sat gazing up at the comparatively limited section of water-stained ceiling exposed to his view.

During a particularly long prayer on a certain Sunday in his seventh year Tom's small forehead slipped from the hymn-book upon which it was reposing and his front teeth came suddenly into conflict with the rack below, with the result that a considerable amount of ancient varnish forced its way into his mouth. He found somewhat to his astonishment that the antique glue and pulverized wood had a by no means unpleasant taste. In the joy of thi discovery he straightway began gnawing arou the pew in divers places like a small and vigor rodent.

Unfortunately this was possible only during prayers when he had an excuse for lowering head, until, looking for other worlds to gnaw eyes fixed themselves upon the mahogany rai ning around the top of the pew. At that m his mother happened to be absorbed in a parti eloquent passage which the rector was readi St. Chrysostom, so that Tom was enabled, attracting her attention, to crawl into the corner of the pew, draw himself up to his fu

and affix his teeth unnoticed in the rail. It tasted even better than the rack below. Soon he had quietly gnawed two small grooves. Oh rapture! Stealthily he placed his hands above his head and lifted himself up until he could drive the two small dog's teeth in his upper jaw into the soft wood. He could feel them sink deeply in, almost as if it were a cheese! Delighted, he let go with his hands and hung swinging there in ecstasy, unsupported save by his teeth.

Meantime the rector continued to read from St. Chrysostom, while Tom surveyed the world beneath him much as an Alpine climber clinging to a jutting rock gazes into the valleys below. Suddenly he became conscious of a small brown face within an inch or two of his own—a girl's! She, too, had apparently discovered the art of hanging by one's teeth. The two children stared at each other solemnly.

"So—you—goth—pew—teeth too!" mumbled, or rather sputtered, Tom.

"Yeth—pew teeth!" mouthed his new friend.

He felt a dawning respect for this equally adventurous spirit. Using his hands again, he lifted his chin entirely over the top of the rail, thus enabling his eyes to see into the pew from which she had thus mysteriously emerged.

At the other end sat a tall, loose-jointed man in a black frock coat. His face was narrow, with protruding chin and a long nose, not unlike an elongated Dante, but albeit the lips were thin, the large mouth

was shrewd and kindly, and the eyes were puckered in friendly wrinkles. To Tom's great comfort he saw that the man was smiling at him.

"Good morning!" remarked this new acquaintance in a confidential whisper. "How do you do?"

At that moment Tom's chin was loosened by a tug on his coat and he was dragged suddenly down from behind, striking his nose violently against the rail. The little girl simultaneously disappeared.

"I should think you'd be ashamed to climb around like that!" gasped Mrs. Kelly in horror, a note of harshness manifesting itself in her habitually subdued voice. "S'pose Mrs. Petersilea had seen you? It's wicked to act like that in church, with God looking right at you! I've a good mind to tell the rector——"

Just then a bright red drop suddenly descended from the end of Tom's nose upon the open prayer-book in his mother's hand.

"Dear me!" she cried in sudden terror, "I hop you haven't gone and killed yourself!"

At the conclusion of the service upon the st steps of the church the two children stared at other in an embarrassed admiration. Tom never seen such a delightful person before. was small and wiry, with blue-black hair and like an Indian. Her brown little face was sp with a red suggestive of a riotous autumn le when she smiled an elfin gleam danced all ar and flickered, laughing, in her eyes.

From time to time he saw her on scatter

days, but beyond the fact that her name was Evelyn he learned nothing further about her. Finally she ceased to come and he saw her no more.

Perhaps the influence that most affected Tom in these early years was his mother's obvious realization, or at least assumption of, social inferiority, in addition to which, a literal acceptance of the doctrines of Christian humility and meekness accentuated her natural timidity and absence of self-confidence. No more self-effacing, humble little lady ever lived than Mrs. Kelly, and if she was a saint by disposition, rather than from intellectual conviction, who shall grudge her her place in the hereafter? So Tom came naturally by the belief that, somehow, he was not quite as good as most of the other people who lived about him, and that he must not force himself upon their notice.

The result of this social reticence was that Mrs. Kelly's entire circle consisted of the clergyman, her suburban aunts and cousins, a few nondescript friends picked up at odd boarding-houses and small hotels during the summer months, and one or two lone ladies like herself, living either on her own street or at the west or east end of the city, while Tom's acquaintances were acquired at the public school and numbered only small males of his own age—the sons of liverymen, tradespeople, and the scions of the foreign population then being rapidly drawn by economic exigencies to Boston.

For girls, owing to the characteristics of the female cousins, he had an abiding distrust and con-

tempt, and when he encountered them, which was rarely, it was his custom to distort his features into a grimace and give them a wide circle.

His mother, by no means so unobservant as might have been expected, had formed a high resolve to give Tom a thorough religious, and then an equally thorough intellectual, education. Only her diffidence prevented her from entering him in one of the excellent private schools with which Boston abounded, but never having ventured, save in a house of worship—all persons being equal "before the Lord"—to mingle with what she supposed to be a divinely appointed aristocracy, she could not muster sufficient courage to thrust her son where she had not the temerity to go herself. Led by an economic instinct to seek pleasure and virtue by the same road, she took Tom each year to some one of the various semireligious watering-places where others, of like mind and similar social status, gathered together for mutual enjoyment. One which she particularly favored, and where Tom spent many his early summers, was on the shores of a small b in Maine. It consisted of fifty-odd shanties, dig fied as "cottages" by the occupants, with a wo chapel and general store.

The preacher was also the local postmaster owned the store as well. His name was Reverend Sparrow." Unlike Uncle Ezra, h stout and good-natured, with a hearty way ing the members of his flock by their first prefixed by "Brother" or "Sister." On w

he wore brown overalls and a black alpaca jacket, and sat on the store piazza discoursing on politics and religion. His lips were smooth shaven, but beneath them wagged a white goat's beard, ineffectually screening a collarless double chin. Tom did not esteem him as he esteemed Uncle Ezra. There was something about "The Reverend Sparrow" which to his childish instincts did not ring quite true, for on Sundays he talked about sin, hell fire, and damnation, and the rest of the time cracked jokes with the parishioners as he weighed out their flour and sugar and handed them their letters and newspapers. He really didn't seem to find life melancholy at all, and his laugh could be heard constantly heehawing all through the camp. This exceedingly confused Tom's mind. At least Uncle Ezra—and—to a reasonable extent—his mother, were consistent. They were constantly occupied with the idea of being "saved." "The Reverend Sparrow" took his salvation with a degree of jocularity, which seemed wrong to Tom; but when he broached the subject to Mrs. Kelly she assured him that the preacher-postmaster was a very "wonderful man" with a "beautiful character." Yet Tom had his suspicions of him.

The visitors boarded at low rates at the cottages, each of which had a name, the majority with a biblical suggestion, such as "Armour Bearer," "Galilee" and "Canaan," although there were others more secular like "Woodchuck," "Nutshell," and "Ararat." For some reason these last

were considered rather the more "chic," and all the visitors engaged in much good-natured banter over the respective merits of their dwellings, referring merrily to one another as "Canaanites," "Woodchucks," "Nuts," and "Galiloots." All this partially robbed salvation of its terrors for Tom. But he could not accustom himself to "The Reverend Sparrow's" attitude of lightmindedness. It seemed to him that the good gentleman took his religion with a wink, as it were.

Tom detested these wanderings in search of health and society, and quickly became expert in discerning their various hypocrisies. Each of the boarding-houses invariably had a sort of presiding genius—a "grand old man"—in the shape of a retired clergyman, who "came" year after year (doubtless at reduced rates) and who, besides reading the service on Sundays, "gave a tone" to the social gayeties of the establishments. Around this benevolent old Buddha, the female boarders kowtowed in admiration, most of them flabby old women, who spent their time knitting in rocking-chairs on the front piazza. The chairs, being of all sizes, moved backward and forward with varying velocities and wide differing parabolas, and gave an impression not like that of the pendulums of hundreds of cl set in a row.

Perhaps the most dismal of these establishme to which nevertheless Mrs. Kelly and Tom turned year after year, was situated in the hills of the White Mountains on a stony fa

fested by woodchucks. By courtesy it was known as the Mountain Home House, though no mountains were within reaching distance, and its religious atmosphere was heightened by the fact that it was located directly opposite the cemetery. In after years the mention of a "summer vacation" inevitably recalled to Tom the vision of a hot, low-ceiled room crowded with small tables about which lingered anæmic waitresses who murmured in disdainful accents, "Roast beef or codfish and cream —rare or well done?" There was but one bathroom, even less inviting than the one on Newbury Street, and the boarders spent most of their time sitting on the piazza watching for funerals.

There was nothing for Tom to do at most of these resorts, except to knock aimlessly the cracked and withered wooden balls around a humpy and sunburnt croquet-ground in the company of some peevish little girl or "fleshy" old lady who wanted to "reduce," or to whang waterlogged tennis-balls across a limp, bedraggled fish-net, drooping in the middle of an undulating field of stubble. For this latter sport, destined as it was to play an amazing part in his subsequent career, Tom had an indubitable predilection, and while his mother could not afford to buy him a real racket, he nevertheless practised it as best he could with a wooden bat whittled laboriously out of a stout shingle.

The predominating religious view-point in these communal households differed both from the attitude of Uncle Ezra and Aunt Minerva and also from

that of "The Reverend Sparrow." The God of the Jenkins had been an austere, wrathful, and terrible God, whose shadow seemed to hover over the earth like that of a gigantic bird of prey; the God preached by "The Reverend Sparrow" was of the same general character but his awfulness was somewhat mitigated by the fact that, while he had pronounced views, he hardly lived up to his convictions, being easily placated by prayer and good resolutions—and he was much more fearsome on Sundays than on the other days of the week; but the God of the boarding-house rusticators was entirely different, for he was as abnormally sensitive as he was omnipotent—he could be deeply wounded even by a little child thinking an unrighteous thought. The idea that he was hourly inflicting acute pain on the Almighty made Tom wretchedly unhappy. H would have preferred to take his chances wi the fierce swashbuckling Jehovah of Uncle Ez and Aunt Minerva. In fact he worried so mu over the celestial suffering of which he supposed h self to be the cause, that he became quite m choly. His mother in her anxiety sought to his misery by telling him that God would "· stand" and "make allowances for little but Tom remained unconvinced, secretly greater credence to the visiting clergyme preached in the hotel parlor on Sundays thar Thus God appeared to Tom a many-sided a what inconsistent character.

Peregrinating thus about the country, T

left few of the summer resorts of New England unvisited during the vacations, and one August she even insisted, much against her son's inclinations, upon going to Newport for a short period. His mother seemed to have a consuming natural curiosity to see with her own eyes how the "other half" lived. They stayed at a cheap hostelry in the lower part of the town, and spent most of the time walking aimlessly about the streets, sitting in the hotel parlors, and occasionally taking short drives. Mrs. Kelly, who continued to wear black for her husband as long as she lived, was accustomed to sport a tiny parasol of the variety fashionable about 1870, the top of which could be adjusted or "cocked" sideways, giving it a rakish air that suggested that the owner must, at least, have "scallops on her boots." Tom loathed the peculiar-looking thing, and being a self-conscious child, used to squirm in agonized embarrassment as his mother, carrying her parasol in complete unconsciousness of its strange appearance, led him along Rhode Island Avenue, while they gazed at the handsome equipages rolling beneath the elms, watched the fashionable people going and coming from the Casino, or examined the stone gateways through which led the smooth, flower-bordered driveways to the palaces of the great.

There was to him something haughtily brutal about the hidden magnificence which he knew lurked behind the shrubbery of those luxurious gardens. Not that he wanted to see them particularly, only

the consciousness of being excluded—that the "no admittance" signs were meant for his mother and for him—gave him the feeling of personally being a sort of pariah, classed him with the niggers, as it were. Sometimes when his mother was looking through the iron railings at the hydrangeas he would shake his small brown fist at the stone turrets of the mansion beyond the trees. And it was in a rebellious, if not an anarchistic, frame of mind that Tom spent those two miserable weeks. Yet this was unusual, for most of the time, at other "resorts" he was merely bored.

When school opened in the autumn they would return to the Newbury Street house, rejoined by Bridget who always spent the vacation period with her married sister at Nantasket Beach. Mrs. Kelly would resume her ecclesiastical activities and Tom his studies at the public school, where he worke hard, impelled by a sense of duty to make the mo of his opportunities and stimulated thereto by h mother, who constantly impressed upon him fact that he had his "way to make in the wor and that if he was industrious, and neither sm nor drank until he was twenty-one, he might ceed, not only in an earthly sense, but also by ing up substantial treasure in heaven.

"But I would rather have him a *good* man *great* man," she would say; "I have alwa Tom *that*."

Thus he was given to understand that th ought not to be difficult for a youth of his

achieve greatness, nevertheless, should the question arise, he would be expected to relinquish prosperity for virtue. Just what his mother regarded as "success" from a worldly point of view Tom was never quite sure of, but from casual remarks he concluded that she had in mind a prosperity about equivalent to that of Amos Witherbee, Cousin Minnie's husband, who was a lumber merchant over in Cambridgeport. Mrs. Kelly always referred to Cousin Minnie as a "*beautiful* woman," and when Tom, having seen her for the first time, remonstrated that she was not beautiful at all but quite the contrary, his mother said: "I mean she has a beautiful character. Handsome is as handsome does. If you were always as good as your Cousin Minnie I should be perfectly satisfied." The fact was that "Cousin" Minnie was no relation at all, but her example none the less may have inspired Tom to virtue.

Excepting Saturdays, school "let out" at two o'clock, after which Tom hastened home to a cold lunch, and then rushed out into the street to play, while his mother sat sewing at the bow window in the parlor awaiting his return. At first, just after his graduation from Bridget and the back yard, his amusements were confined to the bounds of the block upon which he lived—to snowballing, playing "catch" across the street, spinning tops, or rolling marbles, for the collection, started by the Elder Kelly, his father, had multiplied enormously. But as Tom gained in wisdom and stature, he journeyed farther afield, stealing long rides in winter down

the "back allies" on grocerymen's "pungs" or leading exploring expeditions, composed of other small school friends and sometimes of friendly "muckers," into the wildernesses of "Muddy River" and the Milldam. It was due to a merciful dispensation of Providence that Mrs. Kelly could not see her only son upon these excursions, for in winter the boys "ran tiddledees" over the quaking, ticklish ice-fields of the Back Bay beyond "Westchester Park," and in summer floated recklessly around upon rafts improvised of loose boards, fishing for eels. Moved by the instinct of self-preservation—for Tom's social timidity had curdled into a fierce antagonism to the "rich boys" on Commonwealth Avenue and Beacon Street—he organized a "gang" of social derelicts like himself, to wage both offensive and defensive warfare, upon other and similar "gangs" in other quarters and upon the "muckers" who periodically appeared like invading Huns from the south and west ends and offered battle upon the greensward of the Avenue.

Thus, in spite of his mother's constant care, Tom got plenty of fresh air and exercise, and expanded in all directions, until his small jackets and pantaloons were stretched to bursting, and often his wanderings took him so far afield that it was long after dark before he reached home, weary of foot and empty of stomach, to find the street-lamps lighted and his mother peering from behind the white curtains of the parlor window. Instantly she would be down-stairs to open the door, giving him a

reproving, pecking kiss, accompanied by a complaining:

"I should have thought you would have thought a little of your mother and not stayed out after dark in this way. I was worried to death!"

And Tom, with a terrible sinking of the heart and in genuine contrition, would admit his sin—crave pardon, and be forgiven, while his wet shoes were removed from his feet, and they and his small back were rubbed vigorously with alcohol. Then in dry clothes, his extremities parboiled from the afternoon's floundering in snow or water, he would consume huge quantities of Indian meal mush, cold meat, potatoes, apple sauce, gingerbread, and highly diluted milk or cocoa.

Afterward under the bronze gaslight in the library Tom would drowse over "Greenleaf's Mental Arithmetic" or the "School Geography" while his mother, and Aunt Eliza, possibly, would play a game of "parchisi" or discuss the comparative excellences of their favorite patent medicines; and when the marble clock on the mantel chimed nine he was quite ready to climb up to the third story rear and go to bed, leaving his mother to come up, kiss him softly good night, and turn out the gas. On the whole, it was by no means an unwholesome life for a boy to lead.

Though Tom regarded his mother as the most perfect, if not the most beautiful, human being in the world, he sometimes wondered why he found it so difficult to talk to her about the various subjects

in which he was interested or which he was taught at school. Mrs. Kelly's reading was confined almost entirely to the Bible, a few novels of a strongly religious flavor by Marie Corelli, and the death notices in the *Evening Transcript.* She recognized herself as quite unable to cope with the speculations and perplexities of his active young mind and adroitly evaded all topics in which she might find herself at a disadvantage. In consequence their conversational interchanges were almost nil.

As the reader has already divined, Mrs. Kelly was a negative sort of woman, distrustful of her own capacities, and supremely conscious of her own limitations. Tom was the centre of her universe and she could see nothing but that centre. She was like a hen with one chick, ready to flutter it off to safety at the first premonition of danger, but prepared to fight viciously for her offspring if occasion demanded. She was, so to speak, a mother and nothing else. She was neither a wise nor discerning one. But she gave to Tom a passionate devotion that made her the abiding influence in his career. This devotion he returned. The house on Newbury Street was his world, albeit a very small one. Beyond its limits he strayed but rarely, and in his wanderings he never came in contact with any more intellectual or luxurious existence than his own. There was practically no alteration in their mode of life up to the time of his entry into college, for which he had been passably well prepared by the public schools of his native city, and thus, when

last his mother reluctantly and with a heart full of misgivings cut the apron-strings which had bound him to her, Tom at the age of eighteen was about as innocent, if not ignorant, a young person as had ever passed inside the gates of Harvard University, where, to be strictly accurate, this story can only be said to begin.

IV

THE pop-eyed little man with the domelike forehead who had been lecturing to the class in mediæval history—hurrying breathlessly through his notes so that Otto the Saxon King might be safely crowned in Rome before the hands of the big clock should reach twelve—closed his portfolio with something like a snort of relief, and removed his double-lensed glasses.

"Next time we shall consider the reciprocal influence of the Roman and Teutonic elements on the character of the empire," he announced severely. "There will be an hour examination next Friday from Theodoric to the Dissolution of the Carolingian domain."

Two hundred pairs of shoes simultaneously scraped the floor, and the lecturer, swiftly grabbing his derby hat, scurried for the door to avoid questions. There were always half a dozen grinds who wished to display their erudition by digging up unheard o minutiæ and interrogating him casually about the as if they were matters of commonest knowledg He had seen from the corner of his eye an ass nam Ricker trying to outflank him and spring (he confident) something on him about the iconocla schism. He gained the exit triumphantly, howe

and disappeared like a rabbit in the direction of Quincy Street, for it was a drowsy, soft spring day full of quivering sunshine, and he intended to go out to Oakland for a game of golf.

The class jostled out of the building, and scattered in all directions, a few lingering around the threshold of the old red-brick revolutionary structure to smoke and discuss the lecture.

"'Crabs' was on the run to-day," grumbled Ricker, who having lost the lecturer was eager to vent his learning on somebody. "I had a hard time taking everything he said down in shorthand—but I managed to get it. That stuff about the 'Capitulary of 802' for instance—" his voice rose in stealthy enthusiasm.

"Oh, shut up, Ricker!" growled Tom Kelly, now grown to the mature age of nineteen. "You make us all tired. It's bad enough to listen to 'Crabs' for fifty minutes without having it all warmed over and dished out second hand by you. *I* don't even know what a capitulary is. I don't want to. It sounds something like a caterpillar. I'll bet it was rotten, anyway, whatever it was."

Ricker was eagerly turning the pages of his neatly inscribed note-book.

"All persons within his dominions, as well ecclesiastical as civil, who had already sworn allegiance to him as King, were thereby commanded to swear to him afresh as Cæsar; and——"

He suddenly ceased, Tom having stuffed a cap into his mouth and thrown him backward on the

greensward, where another of the group held him prone by the shoulders, while a third snatched his precious book and ran across the yard with it toward Thayer's Hall.

Ricker arose, grinning sheepishly. He was a fat, pimply, pasty-faced youth with bristly hair radiating from his rather small head like porcupine quills. Tom made a good-natured feint at him.

"You'll feel differently, you bet, when you're cramming for the exams," Ricker protested, spitting wool from his mouth. "There ain't another feller but me's got it all. I could sell it and make a lot of money out of it."

"Oh, pouff!" cried Tom. "You don't *understand* that mess any better than the rest of us. I'm gorged with schisms and alliances, and influences and doctrines, and I don't even know where the countries were that had 'em! Why didn't 'Crabs' start out, for instance, with a big map and a poke and tell us on the very first day what the who blooming course was about? He could have poin out the Garden of Eden and said: 'Adam was h *here.*' Then by easy stages he could have wo down to the Middle Ages and got fairly st Instead, he talked fifty minutes about Alexan Neo-Platonism. What is Neo-Platonism?"

"I knew three months ago," announced a tall, sardonic youth, lighting a "Sweet cigarette. "But I'm damned if I know *nou* say you to food? The odor of fat venison us even now to yonder ivy-covered hall."

He turned down the diagonal path, linking his arm through that of Tom, who had shot up to six feet in height, with an athletic, if slender, build. Tom did not like Andy Peters unreservedly, but he had had so little choice in the selection of friends that Andy, if excluded from his circle, would have left a wide gap in it.

Little Arthur Holden, a rosy-cheeked boy, whose father was a clergyman in one of the Boston suburbs, strolled along beside them.

"I agree with you, Tom," said he. "They deluge us with a stream of Popes and Emperors and Kings —whose names we won't even remember—and dates and diets and concordats when we don't—most of us—know what the really big events of history are."

"Yes," answered Tom, "or what anybody was like. What's the use of knowing what relation Pipin of Herstal was to Charles Martel when no one tells you whether they wore paint or feathers, or lived in tents or houses. I can tell you something about the Diet of Worms, but I haven't an idea what the 'dieters' looked like, whether they came in carriages or on foot, wore their hair long or short, or what they ate for dinner."

"The most important thing is what *we* are going to have for dinner!" vouchsafed Peters. "Oh, hang! —it's 'dog day'—sausages for ours. I can smell 'em."

They walked through the transept of Memorial Hall, between the white tablets placed there in memory of Harvard's sons who died in the Civil

War, and emerged suddenly out of its shadowy silences into the noise and clatter of the great college commons.

Tom had passed through a healthy, studious, and, on the whole, not unhappy adolescence in Boston, continuing his education in the city's public schools and finally matriculating in his eighteenth year at Harvard.

In these intervening years Tom's face had changed its contour and his curly hair had darkened, so that it was now auburn-brown. His forehead was broad, his nose straight, his eyes a deep blue, his lips full and clear cut, and his chin firm and well moulded. He moved rather deliberately, but with a characteristic certainty, and had it not been for his "high-water" trousers and generally shabby clothes he would have passed for an attractive and athletic young Englishman. But Mrs. Kelly had no surplus funds to waste on the apparel of either her son or herself, and so Tom's collars were usually frayed, and his trousers and coats rarely matched. In fact his habitual costume was a very shiny blue jacket above a faded pair of steel-gray trousers. Gloves he never donned. His shoes were always down at the heels and held to his feet by curiously knotted strings. For both he and his mother would have felt that they had sinned had they replaced a garment still capable of being repaired. Clothes, like food, were, according to their creed, for use and not for pleasure. Their lives no room for mere luxuries. So to Tom the cru

fare of Memorial Hall seemed good, as it undoubtedly was in the sense of being wholesome, and he managed to tuck away a substantial amount of it three times a day, to which he added a supplementary menu around eleven o'clock in the evening of hardtack and hot chocolate boiled over a gas-stove in his bedroom.

The Hall, even at a quarter past twelve, was filling up and the boys found several of their table companions already there. Most of them had been "assigned" to this particular table—the one under the alleged Stuart portrait of Washington—by the merest chance, having had no group of their own to join. Of the twelve, two, including Tom, came from Boston, one from Worcester, two from Lowell, one from Chicago, four from Dorchester or Roxbury, one from Alabama, and one from Texas, and all had entered Harvard practically without friends.

They were a good-natured, and for the most part, an innocent-minded lot of lads, of as various characteristics as an equal number of grown men. Each was the product of his own home influences, and a few minutes' conversation with any of them would have sufficed to disclose the character and attitude toward life of the boy's parents, if he had any.

"Here you, Moses!" shouted Tom to the negro waiter. "Bring me a couple of 'hot dogs'! Who's got the spuds? Pass 'em along, you Cryder."

He took his place at the end of the table and began to spread a large disk of ship's biscuit with an extremely salt variety of kitchen butter.

"Goin' out for the track team?" inquired Cryder, who was a brawny Viking of six feet three. "I should think you'd make a good man for the quarter mile."

Tom shook his head, his mouth being full of hard-tack. He felt no confidence in any athletic prowess.

"A chap gets a fair deal there, anyhow," asserted Cryder. "They *can't* leave you off the team if you *beat* the other fellow! I didn't get any show at all for the football team."

"It did seem as if you might have made our class eleven," said Tom politely, ignoring the fact that Cryder had made a pitiful spectacle of himself in the Freshman try-out.

"I wasn't thinking of myself," apologized Cryder hurriedly. "But in general there's a terrible lot of favoritism, don't you think? Societies for instance——"

"Sh!" interpolated Peters. "Don't you know enough not to talk about such things right out loud in Memorial Hall? Somebody might hear you! You're not supposed to know that they exist."

"They don't for most of this bunch!" growled Ricker, the grind. "You fellows have about as much chance to make the 'Dicky' as this nigger Moses. I tell you no one has any social pull in this place unless he had a father or an uncle i one of the clubs or comes from one of the sw schools."

"Bunk!" retorted Tom. "I don't believe any such thing. If I was running a social club, Ricker, you bet I wouldn't have *you* in it! You'd turn all the drinks sour!"

"Never you mind!" scowled Ricker. "You'll find out I'm right, all right. Look here! How many of those fellows who live in Claverly Hall have you met? How many men from the Back Bay come to your room?"

"I come from the Back Bay myself!" grinned Tom, and the rest of them laughed. Ricker returned venomously to his sausages.

"Well, we can't all of us be swells!" spoke up Arthur Holden. "I shouldn't be surprised if all of us made some club or other. And what difference would it make even if we didn't? You fellows are good enough for me!"

"Hear! Hear! Just listen to Little Hopeful!" sneered Peters. He glowered at Holden malevolently. Something evidently had touched him on the raw. Suddenly he smashed his glass down upon the table so that the milk leaped in a jet into the air.

"Damn it!" he cried excitedly, "what do you want to go and spoil my lunch for? It's rotten! Everybody knows it's rotten!" he blurted out the words, glancing over his shoulder at the near-by tables as if fearful of being overheard. "You talk like a lot of holy kids. We're a bunch of lemons, and the sooner we admit it to ourselves the better." He looked upward suddenly toward the gallery.

"There! If you want to succeed at Harvard you ought to behave like that beastly little snob Catherwood up there. Just look at him! I'd like to punch his face!"

The boys raised their eyes with one accord. A small, neatly dressed young gentleman with carefully parted hair was standing in the gallery beside a girl in a pink-and-blue muslin dress. She gazed curiously down on the hundreds of undergraduates whom her escort seemed to regard with supercilious condescension, as he indicated various features of the hall with his freshly gloved hand.

Catherwood was in fact an unfortunate example of the single cad who in every college class manages somehow to get himself accepted at his own exalted valuation and, through the indolence or good nature of his associates, to win a conspicuous social place in the college life.

"Oh, Lord! Look at him!" echoed Cryder. "He's got on new yellow chamois gloves!"

"Showing her how the animals feed!" snarled Peters again.

At that moment a middle-aged man in a frock-coat and shining tall hat, who bore a distinct resemblance to the dapper youth, appeared beside the couple.

Instantly all the students, in accordance with ancient custom, turned toward the gallery and began to clap vigorously. The girl blushed, became confused and drew back, but the gentleman seemed under the impression that the applause was a tribut

to himself for he smiled and, almost imperceptibly, bowed. At this the clapping doubled in volume. In return the elegant stranger made a pronounced inclination in the direction of the audience below and slightly raised his hat. The din increased. A thunderous roar arose from the tables, accompanied by the banging of knives and forks and stamping. Catherwood, the younger, hurried forward and spoke hastily to the innocent cause of the disturbance, who, theretofore merely mystified, now looked very foolish and removed his hat entirely, amid renewed applause—after which he hastily fled.

"Seems a swell can make as big an ass of himself as anybody!" opined Tom. "So that's Catherwood, is it?"

"I always heard he was a very nice fellow," asserted a boy named Walton-Smith who spoke with a careful enunciation and was rather better dressed than the others at the table. "I don't see how it's anything against him that he's rich. He can't help that, can he? I bet he's all right or all those big men in the class wouldn't go with him."

"Better call on him at his suite in Dunster and see for yourself," grimly suggested Peters. "My, but you'd get the icy mitt!"

Tom maintained silence. He had had an experience with Catherwood earlier in the year. The first day of the term when the line formed in the yard to "register" he had found himself beside this very boy, although he had not known his name. Though the latter was only coldly polite they had

had some slight conversation, which Tom had regarded as sufficient excuse for nodding when next they met. But Catherwood had looked over his head, declining either to recognize him or return his salutation in any way. Deeply chagrined, Tom tried to deceive himself into the belief that Catherwood's rudeness was unintentional and due to bad eyesight. He knew better, however. For the first time in his life he realized that, for some reason, another human being did not wish his acquaintance. It was a trifling incident but it had been like a blow in the face, and had driven him deep into his shell. Thereafter he had waited to be introduced to his classmates and the introductions had been few. Yet his natural spirits were high and he had a dry, whimsical humor that could keep the boys chuckling, as he recounted various childish experiences in which figured Uncle Ezra, the "Reverend Sparrow," and other worthies. Being at this period simple, kindly, and straightforward, as well as more than usually sociable, Tom, not knowing how to make new acquaintances, took up with such wastrels as chance cast in his path, and, his friendships being fortuitous, the friends themselves were of a heterogeneous character. But the canker of discontent gnawed at his heart, when he saw other men, who, perhaps, had made the athletic teams, becoming good frien and running things generally while he figured the class, so far as he figured at all, as a mere s tator. But he made up his mind never to adn disappointment! There was no use being

"grouch," and people had to be left out in college just as much as anywhere else, so when Peters had said that they were a "bunch of lemons" he had dissented as vigorously as the others. Nevertheless he knew it was true. They *were* lemons—of a sort! He was sensitive to a lack of what might be called "quality" in all of them—except perhaps Francis True, the dreamy little cripple who spent most of his time in studying music and reading poetry. He roomed just over Tom and was always apologizing to him about the piano, although to the latter it was a real delight. Those other chance friends of his lacked—he couldn't say just what. It was something about their point of view. They had a penchant, even Holden, for rather dirty stories. Ricker was a coarse brute, and so was Cryder, while Smith and Peters had the habit of mysteriously disappearing in the evenings, either alone or together and turning up the next afternoon very seedy and with their eyes ringed with circles. Smith made such a noise about being a gentleman that Tom found him unconvincing. If he hadn't talked about it so much, perhaps——!

At the same time he knew that there were men in the class that were his ideal in every way—Raymond Dwight, for instance, the president, who had lived all his life on Commonwealth Avenue within five blocks of Tom's house without their ever having met. But how get to know him?

Tom still spent his Sundays at home with his mother, returning to the Newbury Street house in

time for supper on Saturday night. Mrs. Kelly was now over sixty and her hair was nearly white; Bridget also had broad streaks of gray in her thin straight tresses and her homely face was heavily lined with wrinkles; while Maggie, his old nurse, had succumbed to the drunken endearments, supplemented by legal threats, of her tailor husband and had disappeared into the wooden wildernesses of Roxbury. Also his mother had relaxed something of her religious severity, while adhering stringently to its outward forms and observances. She still attended regularly all the meetings of her various church societies and had induced Tom by urgent solicitation to act as an usher on Sundays, but she had no realization of the necessity of youth for mere gayety and laughter. She thought, good soul, that it should be enough for Tom, after his week in Cambridge, to sit quietly at home on Saturday nights with her in the library, and on Sundays to escort her sedately to their house of worship.

But acting as an usher at St. Agnes's was a pretty tame substitute for the week-end relaxations of m of the other boys in the class. There were Pa ıti elegant "Saturday Evenings," for instance, wl the youth and beauty of the Back Bay ıd Harvard then foregathered just as they had f generations past. There had been a succession Papantis and everybody in Boston (who was A body) attended their classes, just as he belong the Somerset Club and had a seat at the Syr

Rehearsals. But Tom knew that he could never hope to break into Papanti's select circle—for there had never been a Kelly in the dancing-class and there never would be. In various indefinable ways it had been brought home to Tom during the ten years preceding his advent in Cambridge, that anybody of his name was regarded by the Back Bay somehow as a sort of "mucker."

Tom had begun his career at Harvard without even a rudimentary knowledge of the art of dancing, and, needless to say, did not own any garments that by the extremest poetic license could be regarded as "evening dress." When his friend Walton-Smith, therefore, invited him to a dinner at the Walton-Smith villa in Brookline "to be followed by dancing" it was necessary to explain to him that dress clothes were *de rigueur;* and Tom, resolved to make the most of his opportunities, went down somewhere on lower Washington Street and there unearthed a "Professor" Salvini who, for half a dollar, gave him fullest instructions as to how to—"one-two-three-slide" and permitted him to spend an hour waltzing with two stout Swedish cooks, his pupils. The cooks were not only good-natured but danced rather well, and Tom, having hired a dress suit for three dollars, attended the Walton-Smiths' dinner and enjoyed it hugely.

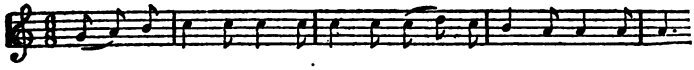
It was his first glimpse of any sort of luxury. He did not know that it was a pretentious affair, that his hosts were ill-bred *nouveaux riches*, that the music was cheap, and the dinner sent in from a

caterer's. He saw only bright flowers and the faces of smiling girls, heard only the exhilarating strains of the waltz. To his starved soul it was little less than ecstasy. And this peep into the world of gayety sent Tom back to his lonely room in Cambridge even more disgruntled than before, feeling that he had been cheated out of something which it was too late for him ever to regain, and that among those vaguely responsible were Uncle Ezra, Aunt Minerva, and the "Reverend Sparrow." Without having a suspicion of it, he was ripe for a revolt, almost ready to kick over the moral bucket and "spill the beans." Without acknowledging it, he was sick of Horatio P. Ricker, Cryder, Holden, Peters, Walton-Smith—all of them! He wanted something better—just what, he could not have formulated. He wanted, doubtless, what he had no right to expect—that the world should be changed, and the hopelessness of it all, including the fact that the world wouldn't change, was so obvious to him that, as he sat in his room on the evening of the celebrated appearance of Mr. Howard Catherwood's father in the gallery of Memorial Hall, he could hardly read his Gibbon for the blinding tears that would force themselves between him and the fine print of the page—for there was a sound in the yard that fills the Freshman either with ecstasy or despair, the lilting song of a hundred men as they march to "take out" the latest member of the "Institute of 1770."

They were coming across the Yard from s

other building and the song grew louder and louder each moment.

"Tra lala—la!—lala!—lala!—lalalala!—lala! —lala!—la!——"



Other lads, sitting alone in other shabby rooms, heard the song and their hearts stopped beating. Even Tom, wholly aware that there was probably not a soul in that entire heterogeneous society who knew him by name, held his breath as the tramping feet drew near. Could they possibly have heard about him in some mysterious fashion? Perhaps they had a system of secretly looking up everybody in the class without his knowing it and——

"Tra lala—la!—lala!—lala!—lala!——"

They were right outside now. They were coming in! The goose-flesh rose on his back and arms. Their footsteps thundered on his very threshold! His head swam in an agony of expectation. Why didn't they pound on the door or break it in? Should he go and open it—just a crack? For a moment there was silence outside—and he could hear the rustle of a paper. In that instant partial sanity returned to him. Of course it couldn't be that they were coming for *him*— But for whom? —in that building? Suddenly with a shout the crowd stampeded on up the wooden stairs——

"Tra—lala—la—" the song halted for lack of breath.

He heard a sharp knock directly over his head, a confusion of voices, cheers, and then a tumult of feet as the crowd descended again and poured out into the Yard.

They had taken out little Frank True!

Astounded, Tom threw open his window and let the humid night-air dry the sweat that had gathered profusely on his forehead. He felt strangely weak. They were nearly down to Matthew's now—the song getting fainter and fainter. Frank True? Why, True didn't begin to know as many fellows as *he* did! They took True——!

"You in, 'Irish'?"

The door had been burst unceremoniously open by Ricker, who, collarless, his head bound with a wet towel, seemed to be suffering from some kind of stroke.

"Say!" Ricker's voice choked as if his throat were quite dry. "Are you on to what's happened? The 'Institute's' taken out Frank True! That miserable little skate up-stairs! Nobody ever heard of him at all! Damn it all! Damn everything!" Ricker was beside himself—frankly crying——

"Oh, buck up!" replied Tom, gazing bitterly into the night.

"I heard 'em coming," Ricker almost sobbed. "They stopped right out in front—and—I—I—thought maybe— I bet *you* did too—'Irish'! How c'd we *help* it? And it's that little squirt that plays the piano all day! How do you s'pose *he* ever got any pull? And look how I've worked!

You know merit *ought* to count for something! And you, too, Tom—you really know a whole lot of fellows!"

Tom did not respond, for his universe was rocking. Of course, True might be a swell in disguise—you could easily be mistaken, especially in one of those awfully quiet fellows. And on the other hand it might have been merely a chance shot. He didn't believe those things went by chance, though. How ridiculous of Ricker to have the absurd idea that they were coming after him! And yet—his spirits sank—what reason had he to suppose that he was any more socially acceptable than the grind? Weren't they two of a kind—two lemons off the same tree? He felt a sudden detestation for both Ricker and himself.

"Hang it!" he growled, without looking round. "Don't be a sour-belly! Quit the baby act, won't you?"

Then, hearing nothing, and feeling that he had been a bit inconsiderate, he added:

"Of course, it's rotten hard lines!"

There was no response and he turned to find the room empty. Ricker had retired to the more sympathetic atmosphere of his own dingy quarters across the landing. Tom, glad of his departure, filled his pipe and smoked it in silent bitterness of spirit. Curse the luck! Everybody else seemed to be having a good time except himself and his own crowd of left-overs. There was nothing for him but to grind—grind!

And what good would it do him in the end? Four years thrown away when he might be getting ahead in some good business—or studying law perhaps. There he would sit by himself in that same room for four dreary years! What was the use of his being at Cambridge at all? It was just inviting misery! He had looked forward in a vague way to college as a place where all the fellows in a class sat around on the grass joking one another, or singing songs about "bright college days." Bright college days! He didn't know even his own classmates when he saw them in the Yard!

A step sounded outside and Peters sauntered in.

"That was a hell of a note, wasn't it?" he inquired. "A lot of slobs must have had heart-failure to-night, all right! Well, I always suspected True of being a deep one. But it'll all come out in the wash."

He went over and stood by the window and Tom perceived that he was arrayed in an immaculate blue suit with a dun-colored waistcoat.

"Look here!" said Peters suddenly. "Aren't you ever going to get any fun out of life? Come along into Boston with me right now and let's make a night of it. Why not have a good time? We're out of it here, fast enough, but Cambridge isn't the whole world by any manner of means. That blooming 'tra — la — la' has got on my nerves!"

Peters's suggestion had come at the psychological moment, for Tom felt the physical need of escape

from an atmosphere which seemed to be smothering him.

"What are you going to do?" he asked in perfect innocence of Peters's actual designs.

"Have a boiled live lobster and mug of musty, first off," he answered, suppressing the smile that rose to his lips.

"Cost much?"

"Oh, I'll blow you!" offered Peters royally. "I need a really jovial companion."

Tom gave a melancholy laugh.

"All right," he agreed, "I'll go you."

He blew out the kerosene-lamp swiftly, as if fearful that he might change his mind, and snatched his hat off the peg behind the door.

"I'll go as far as you like!" he added as he kicked to the door viciously; and they hurried down the steps together into the darkness of the Yard.

V

TOM did not awake next day until noon and, when at last he did, it was with a severe headache over his right eye and a taste in his mouth suggestive of having devoured dusty fur. Moreover, he had also an aggravating realization that the fun had been by no means worth the price he was now paying for it, and that he had escaped lasting degradation only by a narrow margin. His excesses, however, had culminated only in the drinking of rather too much musty ale, a form of refreshment to which he was entirely unaccustomed.

The reason for this had been simple. The surface car in which Peters and he had journeyed into Boston passed within a block of his mother's home in Newbury Street and Tom had had a momentary vision of the white-haired little old lady sitting in the library over her knitting. He had almost been moved to stop the car and to go over to the house to bid her good night. But he felt self-conscious about it—he told himself that it would not have been polite to Peters. The thought of his mother had, however, tempered the recklessness of his first mood, and when, after the "lobster and musty" at Billy Park's, Peters had proposed "going along on somewhere" Tom had mumbled something in-

articulate about "an hour exam. the next day" and rather brusquely parted from him on the sidewalk.

He was inexpressibly glad now that he had. He lay in bed gazing at a spot on the wall, just as when a child he had stared up at the variegated worsted motto over his mother's bedroom door that invited him in ornamental characters to come and "Be Saved." He could see it now—"Look unto Me and Be Ye Saved." How often as a small boy he had asked himself: "Saved" from what? Hell with its sulphurous fumes, as pictured by Uncle Ezra, had faded out of his existence, not at all as the result of any reasoning process but simply as it were "by attrition." What *was* there to be saved from? Why was it necessary to be saved?

His subconscious mind visualized the room in which he had been born. He saw the sad, sweet face of the steel-engraved Madonna over the marble mantelpiece and the fat, happy, wise little child in her arms. And, as he lay there half dreaming, the face seemed to change to that of his mother when she was young, her eyes full of the mystery of motherhood, and the baby on her bosom became himself—little Tom. He recalled how she would clasp him tightly to her as a tiny child; and he fancied now that he could almost feel her arms.

The twelve-o'clock recitation-bell clanged from the cupola of Massachusetts and startled him to broad wakefulness. The faces on the wall dissolved, leaving only the spot. Through the open

window came the smell of cut grass and hot earth, and the sound of hurrying footsteps on the stone flagging outside. Then, just above his head, somebody began playing Mendelssohn's "Spring Song." He listened, enchanted in spite of his wretchedness. He could almost hear the birds singing in the budding branches of white blossoming trees, see the butterflies as they flickered from flower to flower, smell the riotous perfumes of a germinating and nascent world. The pianist played as if he, too, were happy. The instrument seemed to be singing joyously in answer to his loving touch.

But in the midst of his listening Tom again experienced the pangs of jealousy. No wonder True was happy! No wonder the notes fell in an ecstatic shower from his fingers! Bah! Tom turned over and tried to invite sleep once more. In spite of his disappointment the music soothed him again into a state of semiconsciousness. He found himself repeating, over and over, the words "Come and be saved—Come and be saved"; and suddenly it occurred to him that he *had* been saved from something by the thought of his mother the night before. Curious! Perhaps the words of Christ had a significance he had not suspected. Perhaps different people were saved differently—from different things, or, at least, by different means. The "Spring Song" had ceased and, in its stead, Nevin's "Papillon" was darting amid a flower-bed of sweet music. Perhaps some people were saved by music. Some, perhaps, by their mothers. And some by the love

of God and belief in Jesus. A qualm of nausea made him realize his own little present Hell very acutely. *That,* he had *not* been saved from, but he *had* been saved from the agony of an utter loss of self-respect. It was a great old puzzle, this human life!

At length he got up and weakly dressed. The sunlight dizzied him at first, but soon the fresh air made him feel much better and he crawled as far as the front steps and watched the fellows pouring out of the old buildings to go to lunch. No lunch for him, thank you! The men streamed past him by the hundred, some plodding along alone, some walking in twos and threes, and occasionally in a phalanx of twelve or fifteen jovial companions. But out of the lot only about two nodded to him. The rest were as good as strangers. Was there any reason why half the class should have a good time and the other half not? Why should he be left out? Hadn't he as much to offer as most? He assured himself doggedly that he loved Harvard. It was a "great old place,"—beautiful there in the Yard! And he went to the games and always yelled as loud as anybody—only, somehow, he didn't feel as if he "belonged." He was more like a casual stranger that had simply bought a seat and was politely interested in the result. What the devil did he care *who* won? What difference did it make to *him?* Of course he talked a whole lot like the other fellows in his crowd about the make-up of the teams and the crews, but he knew well that they were aping an enthusiasm they did not feel. He didn't know the

players or oarsmen themselves, and, even if Harvard won, he would not have the privilege of slapping anybody on the back. No, it was a fake—this college life! So feels many a man who belongs to what might be called "the gray zone," which lies between those of his fellows who are obviously qualified and those who are as obviously unsuited by personality and training for college social life. There was no particular reason why Tom should not have received the recognition which he craved. He was well-mannered, attractive, and intelligent. But he had been fortuitously excluded, just as others more fortunate in their friends had been left out of clubs simply because there was no room for them.

He glanced through the open window into his room with its hideous, yellow wall-paper, its big, ugly, rusty iron stove, and the grotesque picture of the bird made of "real feathers" that he had hung so as to cover a soiled spot over the sofa—and the sofa itself! Horse-hair. His mother had suggested using it because it was so strong—and perfectly good—it having belonged to Miss Fanny Trollop—she that weighed three hundred pounds. He admitted that the room certainly was not much to look at, nor yet to live in. It didn't have any "atmosphere of culture" or anything else. It simply looked like a bad case of jaundice. Tom's disgust grew upon him. He wondered who had fixed up Frank True's room for him. Somebody had spent real money on it, for sure! Those big leather chairs cost some-

thing, and so did those old prints—four or five dollars apiece at least. He decided True must in reality be a good deal of a snob underneath. Tom had originally nodded to him just out of pity, so to speak. Of course you'd speak to any little cuss who had a withered leg in an iron brace! But now, if he said anything to True the latter would think he was trying to swipe to him! He'd jolly well leave True alone, he would!

Tom almost immediately had a chance to put this resolution into practice, for Frank came hitching down the stairs on the way to lunch.

"Oh, hello, 'Irish'!" he called out cheerily. "Aren't you eating to-day?"

Tom nodded stiffly, without looking at him. True was puzzled.

"Don't you feel well?" he asked sympathetically. "I hope my playing didn't——"

"I'd thank you not to call me 'Irish'!" Tom suddenly blazed forth. "That's not my name—understand?"

In truth this was the merest pretext for giving vent to his annoyance with life in general, for "Irish" had been his nickname at school, and as "Irish" he was known to all his associates.

True's sensitive mouth quivered, and he turned first white and then a deep red.

"Oh—" he stammered, tears coming into his eyes. "Oh, Kelly! I'm terribly sorry. I wouldn't have said anything to hurt your feelings for the world. I supposed you didn't mind being called

that. So many fellows like nicknames—it seems more friendly."

"Well, I *do* mind it!" snapped Tom and abruptly arose and re-entered his room, leaving True on the steps.

He made himself a cup of hot chocolate over the gas-lamp on the wooden wash-stand and, having eaten half a dozen soda-crackers, began to feel better. Presently, in fact, he felt even better than usual. The omission of a Memorial Hall luncheon is calculated to encourage the gastro-intestinal tract and in addition Tom had the recuperative powers of perfect health. It occurred to him that he had in fact treated Peters somewhat shabbily the night before and that he ought to go and set himself right. After that he would attend the lecture on English literature over in Sever Eleven.

In the bright, lifegiving sunshine, Tom strolled down the Yard under the spreading elms toward the old stone building at the lower end, known as Weld Hall, where Peters had his room. There were few people about, as it was not yet two o'clock —nearer half past one, in fact—so that he could not help noticing a young girl in a dark-blue dress who was carrying a violin-case. She was crossing the Yard diagonally and Tom, quite naturally, slackened his pace so that their paths might converge near Massachusetts Hall. He could not have explained why he slowed up to see what the girl in blue was like any more than a puppy could explain why he turns around a couple of times before he

lies down. Wonderful—the exuberant spirit of youth! Here was Tom tingling to the primordial instinct of man when but an hour before he had been groaning upon the bed of pain! And since the young woman was totally unconscious of his approach, his manœuvre was entirely successful and they came abruptly face to face.

She was nearly as tall as Tom and very slender, and her skin had a rich golden tone which softened the brilliant, even startling, color of her cheeks. She had evidently been thinking, for she raised her eyes suddenly and looked straight into his without seeming to know that he was there. Aware of his presence, she first gave him a look of half-recognition, and, then, as if she had found herself in error, blushed slightly and hurried on. Tom had a strange feeling of having seen those eyes before—he could not imagine where. He found that his heart was throbbing quite excitedly. It was a piquant, alluring face, full of flickering lights and shadows. With a sensation of almost physical pain he watched her disappear around the corner of the building. As she did so he fancied that she, too, looked back. He felt sure somehow that, in a previous state of existence perhaps, he had known this tantalizing young person. And she too, evidently, had been under a similar impression. Dejectedly he walked on.

The door of Peters's room was unlocked and Andy himself was stretched out on the window-seat smoking a cigar and reading a paper-covered book, which he tossed aside ostentatiously as Tom entered.

"What you got there?" asked Tom, examining the title with respect, it being in French—De-Maupassant's "Mon Ami." Peters yawned, a trifle less cordial than usual.

"You sort of welched on me last night, didn't you?" he inquired. "Have a cigar?" And as Tom shook his head he laughed and added: "You do look a bit squiffy."

"It wasn't that," explained Tom, sitting down on the window-seat. "The fact of the matter was I had such a grouch on I wasn't fit to go around with anybody. I felt like a killjoy. I'm sorry I went back on you. That's why I came over."

"Oh, forget it!" said Peters. "I was just as glad you didn't come along!"

His tone, slightly superior, nettled his guest.

"What do you mean by that?" Tom demanded.

"You lost your nerve—that was plain enough!" retorted Peters. "And I don't purpose to be responsible for any one else's morals."

The accuracy of Peters's diagnosis was so obvious that it left Tom without rejoinder. He *had* lost his nerve. Though he no longer believed in a red-hot hell, he regarded the moral code of his mother and of her church as of divine origin. The Bible had plenty to say about the scarlet woman and wine-bibbers—among whom were probably included drinkers of musty ale. But there was a difference between drinking a trifle more than was good for the digestion and actual drunkenness. Drunkenness was sinful. Musty ale was—well, excusable.

You might have a slight mental reservation in accepting all the horrible consequences prophesied as certain to fall upon those who broke the law as contained in Holy Writ, but something would surely happen to you—whatever or whenever it might be. But of course if there was some mysterious way of indulging in sinful pleasures without future retribution, why——!

"Well," he answered stubbornly, and lighting his pipe for moral support, "supposing I did—lose my nerve?"

Peters shrugged his shoulders as if in polite deprecation of any possible criticism from him.

"Nothing," he replied with condescension. "Only —I thought you were more of a man of the world."

"Oh, I guess I'm enough of a man of the world, all right," defiantly answered Tom. Then, lowering his voice as if imparting a mysterious secret: "I'm not such a 'stick in the mud' as you might think!" He didn't know himself what he meant by these words exactly. But they sounded significant even if vague.

Peters said nothing.

"Only," floundered on Tom, "I like to get the other fellow's ideas and—and—that sort of thing, first. Don't you suppose a chap has got to pay for his good time—later on?"

Peters looked at Tom through lowered eyelids, thinking to himself what a holy innocent this big boy was.

"How do you mean?"

Tom hesitated.

"Of course, you understand, I don't believe in *hell*—that is the regular kind of old-fashioned hell. But I do believe in a *hereafter*—don't *you?*" He looked expectantly at Peters.

"I don't believe in any 'hereafter' any more than I believe in any hell," answered the latter shortly. "In fact—to make a long story short, I don't believe in anything—except science. Old Darwin put the kibosh on all religious rot!" Peters stretched his legs comfortably. "You don't go on swallowing Jonah and the whale, do you? Or believe that Joshua just crossed his fingers and made the sun stand still? Well?

"God—so far as there *is* any such thing—and nature are one and the same. Of course you suffer for violating nature's laws. You drank too much musty last night, I can see it in your eyes. But you've paid already for that enormity. You've got the receipt for it in your pocket. You don't suppose that besides having a headache now you are going to get soaked over again, at the Day of Judgment?"

"N—n—no!" admitted Tom.

"Well, if you want to be happy you'd better not. Your health's your *own*, isn't it? If I want to dissipate a little and am willing to pay for it, it's nobody's business but my own, is it? Why, it's all so *simple*, when you look at it *that* way!"

"But the Bible—" interrupted Tom nervously.

"The Bible! Poppycock! Do you pay any attention to what the *Koran* says? Or the *Book of*

Mormon? Well, there's millions of intelligent people believe in them. And they *both* say you can have as many wives as you can pay for!"

"All the same—" began Tom again——

"The trouble with *you* is that you haven't studied these things," went on Peters now fully aroused to the delights of proselyting. "You talk like an old woman. You've got to get your head clear of all this Bible stuff. You've got to start fair. This religious business is bunk. Why this very college is Unitarian. Well, what's that but free thinking? 'Every wise man believes the same thing, but no *wise* man ever tells what it is.' You know what it is—'*nothing.*' Ha—ha! As soon as you find out—what every scientific man knows—that the only suffering in store for you is what you get right here and now, and that nobody is going to stand up at the last great day and tell the angels all about you through a brass trumpet—why then you can go off and have a good time once in a while without worrying about it, because a bit of that sort of thing doesn't hurt anybody. A little dissipation is a good thing! Isn't the world—isn't literature full of the joys of 'wine, women, and song'? You've outgrown Sunday-school, Tommy, my boy. 'The devil is dead'!"

"Well, I'm glad to get your point of view," said Tom. "I don't see why they don't give courses in these things. It seems a whole lot more important than studying about the 'Romantic Movement.'"

Peters laughed.

"If they told you the truth, they'd tell you the same as I do. People aren't frank about these things. You can't reconcile science and the dogmas of Christian theology. But, don't let *me* influence you. I'd hate to feel I'd helped send any one to 'hell.' Just think it over for yourself."

There was nothing wilfully offensive about Peters's expression of his beliefs. If he were right—it would certainly roll a huge burden of responsibility off one's shoulders. Peters made God seem like an "Old Man of the Sea." He wondered if he could bring himself to such a state of mind, in which he wouldn't have to think whether he was doing right or wrong, so long as he was ready to take the immediate consequences. It filled him with a strange and unholy excitement. He even pictured himself as becoming quite a devil, and had a sneaking desire to get points from Peters—"First Steps in Deviltry," so to speak. But he was already late for his English lecture, as it was.

"Well, so long!" he said, pausing in the doorway to adjust his cap. "We must go in town together again some night soon—and stay later!"

VI

THE hour was half over before Tom reached Sever Hall and tiptoed to his seat; and Mr. Russell, the lecturer, was already finishing what he had to say about George Meredith. This instructor was popular with the students for the simple and modest manner in which he lectured, for his whimsical humor, and for the unconventional way in which he expressed his opinions quite fearlessly on any subject that suggested itself. Russell's colleagues usually spoke of him rather deprecatingly as "brilliant, of course—but erratic," while in Cambridge generally he was regarded as something of a "character." He was a lank, loose-jointed man with a face bronzed by golf and camping, a large mouth and a protruding jaw toward which bent down in a friendly fashion a long crooked nose which gave the face its look of determination. His eyes were brown and surrounded by tiny wrinkles, and his whole countenance was creased with fine lines, all of which contributed to the quizzical smile that seemed to come and go of its own accord, and when least expected.

The eyes of the instructor looked off into space for a moment or two as he turned over the pages in his note-book, and each student selected a fresh sheet of paper and prepared to take down what Mr.

Russell should say concerning the next author on their list of subjects. But the lecturer, with an apologetic smile, leaned back in his chair and glanced contemplatively around the room at the two hundred expectant faces uplifted to his.

"I've been thinking," said he thoughtfully, "that the trouble with us professorial folk is that most of us forget that our own particular subject isn't the axis of education. In my own case the temptation to do this is especially dangerous, since literature is nothing but the reflection—of human life. You come to college to be educated, but the only value of education is to learn how to *live*."

He hesitated, and the familiar smile hovered about his mouth for a brief moment. "Come to think of it, I don't recall at the moment any particular elective that is devoted to that subject. Sometime perhaps— Well, literature, in one way or another, records the various answers given by the thinkers of all ages to the question of what life is all about and how it can best be lived. And in proportion as those answers help the race to live, literature is really vital—not otherwise. Unless it helps us to see the true value of things and their relative importance, it is harmful. 'What profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul'?"

Mr. Russell seemed almost to be talking to himself. Don't set one branch of knowledge above another—for 'knowledge is knowledge'—and mere culture is nothing without a philosophy—a religion —or whatever it is that 'men live by.' Don't make

a god of culture. Don't, in studying literature, lay too much stress upon what we call style—for style is only the form and not the substance, and form without substance is nothing—nothing!"

He shook his head dreamily. Then he gave an almost inaudible chuckle and opened his leather-bound notes.

"And now," he said, "having solved the riddle of the universe and put poor old Solomon out of business, we will proceed with the course. Our next author is Robert Louis Stevenson. *There* was a man who knew how to live, and whose style reflected the calm courage of his noble soul. I knew him well—over in Paris—at Barbizon—we lived for a while in the same cottage and——"

A boy coughed and he looked up suddenly at the clock. "Five minutes after three! Dear me! Well, read 'Virginibus Puerisque' and 'Memories and Portraits,' particularly the essay on 'The Gentleman'—That is all for to-day."

Tom waited until most of the class had swarmed out of the hall and then approached the lecturer, as he picked up his notes, and looked around helplessly for his hat. Here, by a marvellous coincidence, was just the man he was looking for to whom he could confide all his troubles and perplexities—social and ethical.

"Excuse me, Mr. Russell," he said, "sometime would you mind telling me what books I could read that would help me to—to—have a philosophy of life—just what you were talking about?"

Russell paused—one leg on the floor and one on the platform. There was a deeply troubled look on the face of the boy speaking to him.

"Delighted," he answered cheerily. "Let's see, what's your name?"

"Kelly."

Mr. Russell examined a heavy, old-fashioned timepiece and smiled.

"You want to settle everything right off, I suppose? That's right! Let's see. I'm lecturing at Radcliffe at four—why not come and have a cup of tea about five o'clock? I live over on Appian Way —you'll find it easy enough."

"Oh, *thank* you very much, sir!" cried Tom gratefully. "It's awfully good of you to bother about me."

Mr. Russell gazed at him quizzically.

"What on earth do you think I'm here for anyway? To make money?"

Tom became deeply embarrassed. "Oh, no!——" he stammered.

"No," went on the instructor. "I'm here trying to find out how to wiggle along myself."

VII

THE Russell house on Appian Way stood a few feet behind a white picket fence in which there hung a gate fastened by a leather loop. Tom found that to get in you first unhooked this loop, pushed back the gate, and then used a brass knocker. If nothing happened you knocked again—louder; then you heard a grunt and the lecturer himself opened the door, smoking a pipe and in his shirt-sleeves.

"Come in! Glad to see you!" he held out a knotty, brown hand and dragged Tom in.

The house was a queer, chopped-up little place, with tiny rooms, low ceilings, and the floors on different levels, as if built at various architectural epochs, but it was flooded with sunshine and full of warm chintz and bright-colored rugs. On the right of the diminutive entrance-hall was a small library lined from floor to ceiling with books, in which, although it was late April, a bright wood-fire was blazing. On the mantel lay a row of blackened pipes, an old collie dog snoozed audibly on a threadbare sheepskin rug before the fireplace, and in the window stood a desk piled high with blue pamphlets, manuscripts, papers of all kinds and stacks of volumes between which were thrust "spills" or lighters made of newspaper for markers.

There was a rich odor of tobacco and crumbling leather everywhere, an omnipresent sense of comfort; and Tom noticed, as Russell forced him down into a big leather chair, that his host had on carpet slippers. Having offered his visitor his choice of a pipe, the professor threw himself into another equally large armchair on the other side of the collie and examined Tom with good-natured interest.

"I believe you wanted to find out what it was all about, eh? You probably thought from my disjointed outburst this P. M. you had run bump into Marcus Aurelius? Well, you haven't. However—what's troubling you?"

There was something so kindly, so cheery, so hospitable about this lanky pipe smoker that Tom's heart warmed to him almost as to a father. Yet, at the same time, he had a sudden feeling of embarrassment at the idea of complaining about his lot to one who really didn't seem to have very much more himself, yet who regarded life with such huge content. Moreover, his ethical problems in that peaceful, happy atmosphere, appeared curiously speculative and theoretical. He couldn't imagine his host ever having any desire to do those dubious things which Peters alleged that everybody did—or having any question in his mind as to why he should pursue one rather than another particular course of conduct. He did not appreciate either how fully Russell realized that youth is the age of fiery temptation, that it is natural that youth should

wish to be assured that self-restraint is the ordained law of life, that youth is the age of doubt, self-consciousness, introspection, egotism. Russell knew that the same impulse animated Tom in seeking his advice as had animated those hundreds of other young men who had entered that same room, seated themselves in that same big leather chair, and—puffed from that same old black brier pipe. He knew that that impulse was essentially selfish. They all wanted to know the same two things; why they ought to behave themselves—and why they didn't have more fun in college!

He could have told Tom exactly what was worrying him had he chosen to do so, but he waited with a courteously expectant manner as if his visitor were undoubtedly about to propound some wholly novel and vitally suggestive problem. As Tom appeared to find it difficult to begin, he endeavored to give him a start in what he knew to be the desired direction.

"I suppose you're a bit groggy from the new ideas you've had thrown at you out here?" he ventured. "We all go through it. You're not the only one. I was in a very upset state at one time myself. But the curious part of it all is that as you go along the problems tend to settle themselves—every new experience of actual life sheds some light on what has appeared a dark subject, and by and by the shadows are all driven away and there aren't any problems left."

"Yes," answered Tom, finding his tongue at last.

"But at first they're pretty black—there's a sort of chaos in a fellow's brain and nothing left to hang on to!"

Mr. Russell nodded sympathetically.

"In nine cases out of ten that sort of thing is due to discontent. A fellow that's fully occupied and happy hasn't much time to bother about ethics. His instinct tells him what's right and what's wrong —and that's the end of it for him. But the chap who is down on his luck begins to wonder whether he hasn't got some fun coming to him in directions that he's always been taught to steer clear of—to ask himself why he shouldn't cut out and have a good time—just as if there were no 'ten commandments, and a man could raise a thirst.' Now, if you'll pardon me, I'll hazard the guess that you're unhappy about something."

Tom flushed, perceiving that his host had diagnosed his case with psychological accuracy. Instantly he responded to the genial encouragement of the other to constitute him a father confessor.

"Yes," he admitted, "I am." Already his grudge against life had begun to take on a strangely petty aspect. He was almost ashamed to go on.

"What's the trouble?" Russell's voice was like an arm thrown around Tom's shoulder.

"I—I'm lonely!" the lad burst out, his eyes filling with tears.

"Bless my soul!" responded Russell. "How curious!

'The world is so full of a number of things,
I think we should all be as happy as kings!'"

"No," said Tom, "it isn't that. I'm a sort of left-over. I can't seem to get to know the best fellows."

"Which *are* the best fellows?"

"I mean the popular ones—that everybody likes! I don't know *any* of them. And I haven't any way to get to know them. I'd like to join a club, but I won't have the chance. I feel left out—that's the long and short of it."

"Well," answered Russell, "I don't suppose you expect to make a career of society?"

"Hardly," said Tom with such grimness that Russell could not help laughing.

"Look here!" remarked his host with sudden severity. "I guess I'll have to give you a regular talking to! You promise not to mind? Take another pipe of tobacco. The fact is that your point of view is all cock-eyed. Here you are, healthy, strong, sound as a drum in every way—eating like a river-horse, I'll bet—with enough vitality in you to drag a horse-car—life all before you—all its richest experiences ahead—with four years of extraordinary opportunity at your elbow—complaining—growling, pardon me—because you don't happen to know a few dozen men who have elected each other into what they call a 'club.' Don't you see what an absurdity it is? How you overemphasize a fact of only the most trivial importance?

You've come out here, presumably, to get an education—to be 'brought out' of yourself—to learn what you are and how to get along in this great flux that we call the world. Well, you don't expect this university—which is a part of the world—to be different from the rest of it, do you? Or, if so, *why* do you? If you were living in New York or Boston would you expect the Four Hundred to take you to their bosoms? Of course not! You haven't any more right to be taken into a club *here* than you have *there*. You're like the fellow that thinks because he's been born a member of the human race he ought to be given a fur overcoat and a package of meal tickets. You've got to pull your weight—here and outside. You have to take life as you find it. You have no right to demand anything, and you ought to be thankful for everything you've got. Do you realize that you cost the college about three times what you pay in tuition fees? That you're an object of charity?"

"No—I had no idea of it!" answered Tom in genuine surprise.

"Well, it's true!" retorted his host. "You're getting something for nothing and you owe a debt of honor to the men who have gone before you and made your present educational opportunities possible. That's what it means to be admitted into 'The Fellowship of Educated Men.' Some dead man has paid your entrance-fee! And it's a deal better than getting into any social club, where like as not all you'd do would be to lie around and tell

stories or play cards. You ought to be thinking about what you can do for the university, not about whether you're getting every last thing that is coming to you out of the college!"

"That's true, too!" said Tom rather sheepishly.

"Of course it's hard to see other fellows having what you imagine is a high old time while you're being left out. But you're going to see that all your life. You've got to begin by draining the jealousy out of your system if you expect to be happy. And then you've got to make up your mind what you want out of life—and go after it. Do you want to go around with a lot of rich men? Do you want a yacht and a palace at Newport?"

"Oh, I shouldn't mind," said Tom with a forced laugh.

The rugged face of his mentor grew stern.

"If they came in the ordinary course—were incidents in a useful life—well enough perhaps. But let me tell you something! The law of life is struggle—change—development! Man finds his highest happiness in activity, achievement, creative work, self-expression. The idle have no true happiness. Those who seek happiness never find it except in so far as they *work* for it. As my friend James over on Harvard Street says: 'It isn't what we *have*, but what we *are*.' The silver cup a fellow gets for winning a race isn't anything in itself. It's only a symbol. It shows he's the kind of a fellow that can win a race. And it's the same way with money and material possessions of all sorts—valueless except so

far as they are the *indicia* of service. Forget all about your religious, theological, and ethical speculations for a while and stick to that idea. God has put into us this vital spark of energy—to labor—to accomplish. Go to it!

"Just as you owe this old college a debt you can never repay in dollars, so you owe society in the larger sense a still greater obligation. Did you ever stop to think of what you owe the men who died in the Rebellion? To the followers of science who have sacrificed their lives for your physical well-being—for, in fact, the very continuance of your life? Why did they do so? In response to that instinct within us all—call it 'conscience' or what you will—that drives us on to struggle for the betterment of the race—and incidentally to find in that struggle our own salvation——"

The light had faded from the windows and the fire shone upon the teacher's angular features, giving them a new and striking dignity. He bowed his head for a moment and seemed lost in memory.

A log in the fireplace snapped and a molten globule of incandescence fell upon the hearth. The collie sighed deeply, yawned, stretched his fore legs and slowly arose. Then he pricked his ears forward and trotted to the door. There was the sound of a latch-key and of light footsteps in the hall——

"Well, father! Dreaming as usual?" asked a cheerful voice.

Mr. Russell started and looked up.

"Hello, sis! You're late, aren't you? Come in!"

In the doorway stood the girl in blue. The shadows cast by the fire upon her face brought out subtle mysteries of line and curve unrevealed by the afternoon light of the Yard. Her cheeks had flushed rose-red and her eyes, though still laughing, were clouded with a sudden touch of embarrassment. She stood poised upon the threshold, one arm resting against the door and the other clasping her violin-case to her breast.

"My daughter—Mr.—Mr.— I beg your pardon, what did you say your name was!" asked Mr. Russell for the second time.

Tom had climbed quickly to his feet and stood staring at the vision in the doorway. Shades of the Bacchante, of Diana, of Semiramis, of—the Madonna! It was she!

"Kelly!" he blurted out, his muscles atremble. "—Tom Kelly."

The girl smiled and nodded. Then unexpectedly she knitted her brows and gave him a long, quizzical, searching look.

"I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Tom Kelly," she said, "but I've met you before!"

Her voice was low with a vibrant quality like her father's.

"You'll never guess where!"

VIII

"No!" challenged the girl with the violin, with difficulty maintaining her position in the doorway against the assaults of the collie, "you— Get down, Gerald!—Down, sir!— You don't remem— Dad, please call him off! *Don't* you remember '*pew-teeth*'?"

"Pew-teeth!"

Through the dimming firelight, as through the mists of the long-forgotten past, Tom had a glimpse of an elfin, childish face rising unexpectedly to his over the high back of a mahogany pew.

"Evelyn!" he ejaculated.

"That's me!" she laughed. "Only 'how you've grown!'"

"What gibberish are you two talking?" interrupted Russell. "'*Pew-teeth*'! What on earth are '*pew-teeth*'?"

Evelyn placed her violin-case on the desk and gave Tom her hand.

"Don't you remember, dad—when you were teaching in the high-school in Boston—how we went to St. Agnes's and I used to climb up and hang by my teeth to the top of the pew?"

"Why, yes! So you did!" he replied with a reminiscent laugh. "And you called 'em 'pew-teeth'!"

"So did Mr. Kelly—only he wasn't Mr. Kelly then," his daughter continued. "We used to be rivals for head of the class at the primary school, too. We've known each other ten years and over! Only I never knew his full name," she added. "He was just 'Tom.'"

The tall clock in the hall struck six at that moment.

"If you expect any supper to-night, dad," she went on, "I'll have to leave you. Eliza's out and it's my evening in the kitchen."

"Why shouldn't Mr. Kelly stop and take pot-luck with us?" inquired her father.

"He should, if he's willing to run the risk," answered Evelyn. "He can have canned soup, canned corned beef, canned baked beans, canned anything almost—except canned eggs and bacon. I believe I've even got a sausage tucked away somewhere."

"Well, let's go out and have a look!" said Russell. "Come on, and inspect the larder!"

Evelyn led the way to a spotless pantry containing a dwarf ice-chest, the door of which Russell threw open with an assumption of voracity.

"There's that sausage!" he announced. "You're in luck, sir—only it's a small one. I generally get away with half a dozen! But what's all this? Chops! And boiled potatoes, ready for frying! And why shouldn't I step over to the baker's and bring home a pie?"

"That's a good little dad!" declared his daughter. "Get a real old-fashioned squash pie—for fifteen cents! Don't let that baker give you a stale one,

either! He's equal to it, even if he does go to the Episcopal Church on Brattle Street!"

In what seemed to Tom an incredibly short space of time he was invited to sit down in the Russell's white-painted dining-room to a meal consisting of soup, scrambled eggs and bacon (including the single sausage laid out in royal state), broiled chops and fried potatoes, toast, salad, pie, crackers, cheese, and coffee. Evelyn hovered between the kitchen and her seat at the head of the table, and they all waited on themselves.

Tom's acquaintance with women, apart from his early and now almost forgotten experiences with his mother's female relatives, had been small. From time to time he had had amatory passages with various small girls in the summer vacations, which at first had consisted chiefly in showing his interest in them by an excessive roughness of manner and brusqueness of speech. Later on his imagination had fallen a victim to one or two unwholesome, hollow-eyed, sentimental, Brontë-like young ladies, to whom he had not had the audacity to disclose his feelings and whom he speedily forgot.

That he could meet a wholly natural contemporary of the opposite sex, who combined the beauty of a girl out of a portrait by Lawrence or Romney, with the vivacity, charm, and good sense of the heroine of a novel, seemed incredible. That sort of thing he had supposed was reserved for fellows who lived on Beacon Street or Commonwealth Avenue. It was too good to be real.

Tom had never been in any house before pervaded by such an atmosphere of gayety. If only his own home had been like that! If only every home could be like it! Everything was a joke, and somehow whenever Evelyn spoke she seemed to laugh—yet without laughing. Tom could hardly keep his eyes from her face. Could this glorious young person be the little elf that had marched with him in the public school?

"Let me help," urged Tom, when Evelyn at the end of the meal began to pile up the dishes.

"I'm afraid you'd break our priceless earthenware," she retorted. "I paid fifteen dollars for one hundred and twenty pieces!"

"Let her alone!" admonished her father. "She'll probably leave them for Eliza to wash up."

But Evelyn did nothing of the kind and while she washed the dishes in the pantry, Tom and Mr. Russell from where they sat smoking before the library fire could hear her singing.

"She'll never let anybody else wash up for her," said Tom's host, "and there's nothing she enjoys more than cooking and working with her hands. We all do really—if we give ourselves the chance—it's the jack-knife instinct in the boy. One reason so many women are discontented these days, in my opinion, is because they are deprived of the feeling of accomplishment! They never *do* anything. They read a little, walk a little, and eat and talk a great deal, but they never *make* anything the way their grandmothers did. And as

the creative instinct is the strongest element in our natures they must necessarily feel the lack of something in their lives. And this makes them first unhappy and then disagreeable, and there are all sorts of domestic difficulties."

The sound of the knocker at the front door interrupted what might otherwise have degenerated into a moral discourse.

"Hello there!" shouted Russell without getting up from where he sat. "Let yourself in! 'This ain't no grand house'!"

The door opened and Frank True hobbled into the hall and hung up his cap.

"Good evening, Mr. Russell," he said. "I hope I'm not too early!"

Then, seeing Tom, he held out his hand with a shade of embarrassment. "Why, hello, Kelly!"

Tom, feeling very much ashamed of himself for his conduct earlier in the afternoon, took the thin hand in a warm, strong grasp.

"Hello, old man!" he answered. "I acted like a chump this noon—hope you'll forgive me. I had a rotten grouch!"

"That's all right!" smiled True. "We all get those fits sometimes. And I was really very thoughtless. Let's forget it. Where's Evelyn?"

"Here I am!" she answered, appearing in the doorway with her violin. "How are you, Frank? It's fine to have you come over this way. What do you say? Shall we begin our concert right off? Come along to the music-room, Mr. Kelly."

They followed her through a door leading out of the dining-room to a trellised passage connected with a small house—evidently once used for the storage of wood or as a tool-shed. Like the rest of the establishment it was on a reduced scale, but the floor had been relaid with hard pine, and the walls freshly painted. At one end stood an upright piano and beside it a music-stand, while on the wall were arranged shelves full of music. A few easy chairs and a table with a jar of tobacco gave an air of hospitality to this Temple of Arts.

"Keep your pipe!" directed Russell. "We can open the window if necessary."

It was evident that True was on an intimate footing in the house and that both Evelyn and her father were very fond of him, and now as the girl tuned her fiddle and chatted familiarly to the crippled boy at the piano Tom suddenly experienced a feeling of jealousy. Was it—could it be—possible that this beautiful creature could be in love with that little shrivelled fellow? How her eyes sparkled when she talked to him! And they seemed to have a kind of language of their own—a language incomprehensible to him—about inversions, chromatics, diminished sevenths, and all sorts of things pertaining to this common art, that made him feel more left out than ever. Even the music did not sooth his growing unhappiness. He had found the only girl in the world, simply to lose her again! And to whom?

Too late! thought Tom.

Evelyn and her father came to the door with them. Overhead the sky above the newly budding elms was brilliant with low-hanging stars, scintillating in the soft humid air. The subtle mystery of the spring night was all about them. The very earth seemed pregnant with the possibilities of the future.

"Good night, Frank!" said Russell heartily, as he stood by the picket fence. "Good night, Kelly. Come around as often as you like."

Evelyn gave each of the boys her hand across the gate.

"Good-by, Frank! Good-by, Mr. Kelly!"

The distinction was like a knife in Tom's soul. In silence the two Freshmen walked toward the Yard.

"Russell's a fine chap!" Tom at length remarked.

"He's a *great—gentleman!*" responded True, with deep enthusiasm.

"And Miss Russell—" began Tom.

"Kelly!" cried the cripple fervently, "she's the most wonderful girl in the whole world!"

Tom bit his lips in the darkness. It was true, then!

At the entrance of Thayer Hall True paused in dragging his withered leg up the steps.

"Say, old man!" he said warmly, "do you mind if I call you 'Tom'? Let's be friends—shall we?"

And he held out his hand.

"Why—sure!" answered our hero, but in the

darkness of the shadows cast by the great trees the other could not see his rather bitter smile. It was all part of the same luck. He had been left out again—that was all.

IX

THE influences moulding Tom Kelly's character during the next three years were as varied as in the case of most collegians. At Mr. Russell's suggestion he took a course or two in ethics and philosophy, attended the lectures of James and Royce, and if he did not succeed in crystallizing his own ideas on these subjects he at least came to recognize the fact that there was more in the unknown than Peters would have had him believe. At any rate, he steered straight, and escaped many of the incidents of a collegian's career that prove a profound regret in after-life. At the age of twenty-two Tom remained, as he had started, a clean, straightforward fellow —of simple and frugal tastes—who was trying moderately hard to do well at his studies and who, in spite of the excellent reasoning of Mr. Russell, was wretchedly disappointed at the lack of recognition he received from his classmates. There did not seem to be any means available by which he could make new friends. He would now have readily gone more than half-way, but no way presented itself. With the exception of the fellows he occasionally met in True's room, he revolved 'round and 'round—like the "Devil among the Tailors," he told

himself—in the same old crowd of Holden, Cryder, Ricker, J. Walton-Smith, and Peters.

More and more—except for the Russells—his college life seemed but a vain repetition of lectures, examinations, and Sundays in Boston. Unquestionably it was dull. Unquestionably he was not given the chance to make friends among his own classmates offered to-day by the admirable system of Freshman dormitories. Twenty years ago things were different and Tom may have had some cause to complain that the college world was by no means an ideal democracy. Thus for three years he lived —largely on the surface-cars between Cambridge and his home in Boston—almost as a sort of day-scholar or boarder at the university, the victim of a constant sense of exclusion which caused an abiding resentment in his soul and a touch of grim defiance in his manner toward his associates. And then, by what seemed the merest accident, in the spring of his junior year all was changed and a new world opened before his eyes.

"For heaven's sake, 'Irish'! How'd you do that?"

Joe Cryder waved helplessly at a ball which, coming apparently straight from Tom's racket, had, on striking the court, jumped outward and upward at an utterly absurd and impossible angle. "Nobody could get a serve like that!" he yelled in disgust, racing in pursuit of the ball which had rolled half-way across Jarvis field.

"I don't know exactly," answered Tom. "I just stumbled onto it. It isn't difficult. You hold your racket like *that*, and serve with a *right* hand, instead of a left hand, cut. Try it."

He picked the ball up easily with his racket and tossed it to Cryder. His short-sleeved shirt with rolling collar open at the neck, and his duck trousers belted tight around his waist, displayed to advantage the lithe grace of his muscular figure.

"I couldn't do it to save my neck," protested Cryder. "Do it again, will you?"

Tom took the ball in his left hand and, tossing it high in air, waited calmly for it to reach a selected spot in its descent, and then delivered a smashing blow, striking it about eighteen inches above his head. A peculiar phenomenon occurred. The ball, instead of pursuing a direct course across the net, shot like a cannon-ball in a swift curve to the left, struck the ground with a terrific impact and bounded at an acute angle in quite the opposite direction, whirring like a partridge and assuming a grotesque egg shape.

"It *is* funny, isn't it?" admitted Tom with modesty. "I only got hold of it by accident. But *anybody* could do it."

Cryder shook his head.

"Don't you be a fool, 'Irish,'" he admonished. "You keep that serve to yourself—absolutely under your shirt, see?—and you'll be able to beat anybody you run up against. You know *I* almost got into the class semi-finals last spring and I can't

touch that serve at all! And you can do it every time! Have you entered, yet?"

"Yes, I put my name down just for fun and to get the practice," said Tom, who had never regarded himself as particularly expert. In the last few weeks, however, he had had—as he expressed it—a "burst," hitting the ball with such accuracy and speed that men with whom he had played about on a par before, could not now take more than a game or two from him in a set. He had always had a natural "Lawford," and constant practice had given him perfect co-ordination of eye and muscle together with the ability to place any ball he could reach at all, very nearly where he wished to put it in his opponent's court, but he had never expected to become anything more than what he called "a first-class second-class player." A couple of weeks before, however, he had "blown" himself to a new racket of exactly the proper weight and carefully fitted to his hand, and was astonished at his own powers. And then one afternoon he had discovered the "egg serve."

"Do you really think I've got a chance?" he asked Cryder as they walked back in the gathering twilight to the Yard.

"Chance? Why, 'Irish,' if I had a hundred dollars I'd put it on you, in a minute, for class champion. I don't believe Derby, even if he is so quick, could return a single ball. You'll take every service game—on aces. You see. Only keep that serve out of sight until the right time. Tell you

what—we can go over to that old dirt court back of Bracebridge Hall and practise, where no one'll see us! Nobody ever uses it and, when the tournament comes off, you can just *spring* it on 'em!"

Tom had a suspicion, which he hardly dared to recognize as a belief, that what Cryder said was true, and every afternoon he and Joe retired to the old dirt court and prepared for the coming contest by serving to each other every conceivable kind of devilish ball under the most awkward of conditions. When the tournament opened Tom found that he had not the slightest difficulty in defeating all his early opponents and reaching the semi-finals in which he drew Joe Cryder as an antagonist.

A large number of the class had assembled on the benches to watch the finish of the tournament. The day was hot and clear, with no wind, the courts dry. Joe grinned at Tom as they tossed for serve.

"Watch 'em sit up," he chuckled, "when you spring the 'egg' on me!"

Tom ran his eye along the lines of spectators, but saw comparatively few that he recognized. Little Frank True was there with a group of "Woolsack" men, and he nodded to Tom and called out "good luck!"

Cryder won the toss and took the serve. He had a speedy ball, well under control, but his lobs were apt to be wild and his net work was slow. Tom took the first set—six-four—without using the "egg." The second set he pushed Cryder harder and let him have only two games, and in the last

played his best and took six love games with smashing cross-courts and line shots. He still "had the egg under his shirt" as he leaped over the net and grabbed Cryder's hand, while the men on the benches clapped and cheered. Tom felt a thrill of genuine excitement. It was the first notice he had received from his fellows, the first time he individually had been brought to their attention. Little Frank True limped up and was the first to congratulate him.

"Great work, Tom, old man!" he cried. "Hope you're not too tired!" for by agreement the finals were to be played off immediately.

Derby had won his match easily—six-three, six-five, six-three. He was expected to defeat Tom, who was a "dark horse," without difficulty, but he found his new antagonist a surprising opponent. They each played steadily, and took alternate games, until Tom drove his man to the back of the court and held him there helpless—thus winning the set. Derby, astonished at Tom's speed and accuracy, came back with grim determination and by brilliant playing took the next two sets—six-four, six-five. The pace, however, was too fast for him, and Tom won the fourth set—six-three. Each had now won two sets. The crowd of lookers-on had rapidly increased, for word had gone round that a great match was being "pulled off" and that a new "wonder" had appeared in the shape of a hitherto practically unknown member of the class named Kelly—"Irish." Boys who had never heard of him before at once began to refer to him fa-

miliarly by this nickname, and yelled from the bleachers:

"Go it, 'Irish!'" "Soak it to him, 'Irish,' old boy!"

A couple of hundred upper classmen sauntered across from the baseball field and a bunch of law-school men, disturbed over their case-books by the cheering and clapping, joined the spectators.

"Play!" called the umpire, and Tom and Derby stepped out upon the court for the final struggle. The sun was low over the elms on Harvard Street, across the green field came faintly the distant clang of electric cars, and the fresh smell of the moist turf. Tom calmly tightened his belt. He felt lean and hard as a race-horse. He knew he was going to win—could win without the "egg," if need be! Youth was singing in his heart. He wanted to laugh, to turn a few handsprings, to shout at the crowds on the benches: "You see, I'm not such a 'lemon' after all!" Such is the resiliency of youth—the more you tax it the more it draws upon its eternal spring. Each time it is downed it gains new vitality from mother earth. And because he knew he had the match in his hand and wasn't "such a lemon after all," at the very first ball he proceeded to slip on the side-lines and wrench his left arm so that he ground his teeth in anguish.

Derby took the first game. He was coming back strong—fighting for his title. Tom pulled out the second game with a brilliant cannon-ball service, but the pain in his arm caused him to lose the third

and fourth. Some of the crowd strolled away thinking that it was all over. Derby now felt assured of victory. He had found himself able to take care of Tom's service, powerful and accurate though it was, and he looked across to the benches and nodded to a group of his friends as if to say: "It's all right, now. Watch me polish him off!"

It was Tom's serve, and Derby took his stand five feet back of his service line, intending to return with a Lawford down the alley. He saw Tom toss the ball in the air and saw his racket flashing in a queer, unnatural swing. The ball shot at him in a swiftly dropping parabola, veering into the right-hand corner of the court. He stepped back to take it. But the ball, on striking the ground, hummed like a gigantic top and shot high across the court at an opposite angle. Dazed, he walked slowly to the other side. Again Tom's racket swung, again the swift drop and the sideways leap. Twice more it happened.

"Game—love!" called the umpire. "The games are now three-two—Derby leads."

Nobody on the benches knew just what had happened or was happening. They saw the champion waving wildly or standing in helpless impotence while the balls rolled untouched against the back net. So confused was he that he lost his own service, bringing the games to a tie—three all. Once more Tom served, and again using the "egg" took a love game. Derby, becoming rattled at his inability to connect at all with the ball, retired to

the back of the court, and swiftly lost the two last games—still wondering what occult powers Tom possessed.

"Game—match—tournament!" shouted the umpire. "Mr. — what's his name?—wins!"

"Kelly's the name!" remarked Tom as he shook hands with his shamefaced opponent.

There was a great burst of applause. Some one shouted: "Three cheers for 'Irish'!" And they were given heartily. The fellows were all about him now, wringing his hand and praising his play; and, in spite of the burning pain in his left arm, he felt the supremest happiness of his life—the exaltation of successful physical achievement. Joe Cryder was there helping him into a borrowed polo coat, and in an admiring circle at his elbow stood Holden, Ricker, Peters, and Smith. Then he heard little Frank True saying:

"Congratulations, old man! Raymond Dwight wants to be introduced. Says he's never met you."

"I don't mind!" answered the hero of the moment, and without a thought turned from the friends about him and sought the Companionship of the Great.

Ten days later Tom won the college championship, by what in after-years he was accustomed to describe as a "trick"—the "egg."

X

In a softly lighted room, in which a sea-coal fire glowed beneath a mantel supporting a row of ancient pewter mugs and illuminated a choice collection of rare old sporting prints upon the walls, a group of young men were lounging in leather chairs, with the easy self-confidence that comes to those who have "arrived" somewhere, at least for the time being. All were carefully dressed and all, with few exceptions, spoke in an abrupt, clipped Bostonese, only marred occasionally by the flat "a" of the eastern counties of New England. The atmosphere was one of well-being and good-breeding, and their attitude toward one another that of studied courtesy, which obviously included overlooking each other's failings, moral or otherwise. With a couple of dozen other men they were the social dictators of their college class. They knew that the world, of the university at any rate, was their oyster and it tasted exceedingly good to them. And because they felt themselves responsible for the social tone of their year at Harvard they took themselves seriously and regarded the selection of another to enter their sacred circle as a matter of the highest importance, and worthy of profound consideration.

It was the autumn following Tom's sensational appearance upon the athletic horizon, and it was none other than he who was the subject of their informal deliberations.

"Of course, Kelly isn't exactly the type of fellow you'd want to invite to spend a week with you in the summer," muttered Howard Catherwood, sotto voce, to one of his intimates named Pennington as he inserted a fresh cigarette into a slender meerschaum holder. "Nobody ever heard of a 'Kelly' in any club here in Cambridge."

But his remark was overheard and brought swift retribution.

"There's 'Cold-Roast Boston' for you!" disgustedly retorted Allyn Scott, who in appearance was not unlike Tom's erstwhile friend Peters and whose narrow face also showed unmistakable signs of dissipation. "My dear, impeccable young snob, there are plenty of smart people in New York named Kelly, and everybody knows the Kellys of Paris. There have been all sorts of Kellys in clubs out here and elsewhere. You've only heard of 'Slide, Kelly, Slide!' There are others!"

"Well," laughed Dick Crowninshield, the bronzed Hercules who stroked the varsity, "why not be the ones to make the name of Kelly famous? In honoring Kelly, perhaps we shall honor ourselves."

"I should say Kelly was famous enough already," said Raymond Dwight, a curly-haired Bostonian whose presidency of the class had been foreordained almost as soon as his sex had been definitely as-

certained at birth. "A man can't win the university tennis championship, and defeat a half-dozen first-class players—without being moderately famous. The cracks say that Kelly is a 'comer,' and will be the national champion in a few years, if he keeps on."

"But of course we don't want to take a man just because he's a good athlete," protested Lawrence West, a serious-minded youth from Beacon Street who was an expert on Whistler, and did excellent water-color sketches. "He may be quite impossible in other ways."

"Oh, Kelly's all right," announced the fair-minded and generous Dwight. "I'd bank on Frank True's opinion every time. He says Kelly's a fine chap. He's rather hard up, but he comes of good people, and he just happened to get in with a rather cheap bunch when he first came here. It's a mistake, in my opinion, to pick fellows for the club that are all just alike. I'm for giving him a chance."

"I don't see any need of *our* taking any chance," growled Sam Pennington, whose father was a New York banker. "The burden of proof is on *him*. Just because he can whack a tennis-ball around isn't any reason for taking him into a social club. We're responsible for him as soon as he's one of us. What's the use?"

Pennington was a notorious "stand-patter," although this quality in him was otherwise described by his associates, the word not having been invented at this period. The other boys called him

"conservative," which, after all, is more polite. Conservative he was, to a degree. His gospel was to "play safe," to put your social "talent" in a basket and there carefully to preserve it. He was short, with a cherubic face, and gave an impression of sleekness—"fat and well-liking" to use the biblical equivalent, and he believed that if you were well off it paid to let yourself alone. He had rosy cheeks, clear, cold gray eyes, and conveyed an indescribable atmosphere of calm opulence. "Knew how to handle himself," his clubmates all said of Pennington, meaning by this that he knew "when to stop."

"If our friend Sam had originated this blooming institution," drawled Scott, "there'd be only one member, wouldn't there, Sammy old horse?"

Pennington deigned no reply.

"Take him in, if you want to," he said in an impersonal sort of way, as if, having given such counsel as seemed to him wise, his responsibility were ended.

"Darn well-built fellow!" put forth Crowninshield. "Looks like that statue in 'U. 5' of the Greek chap throwing a piece of hardtack or whatever it is."

Lawrence West gave one of his mild rare laughs.

"Hardtack!" he repeated. "Hardtack! Ha, ha! I suppose you mean the 'cestus.'"

"I beg your pardon," hastened Crowninshield in mock apology. "Is that what they called it? I always thought it was hardtack——"

"Oh, shut up, Dick!" interrupted Catherwood. "What's that got to do with this election? That statue isn't named Kelly. And it's not the 'cestus' thrower either—it's the 'discus' thrower."

"Ho—ho!" shouted Scott, kicking his legs in the air. "A battle between the giants! What price 'discus'? What odds on 'cestus'?"

"Quit your noise, won't you!" ordered Dwight. "Now we're on the subject—who knows anything against Kelly or for him?"

There was a rapid fire of assault and eulogy.

"How is his head—swelled?"

"No more than Dick's! Eh, Dick?"

"We need some new blood."

"Then just wait till Kelly lands his 'egg' on your nose!"

"Appoint a committee to look him over."

"Wish True were here—he'd tell us more about him——"

At about this moment True did appear. He was panting from the exertion of limping so fast in his iron brace, and his face was white. In fact the pain in his thigh was well-nigh insupportable. But he smiled through compressed lips at the affectionate chorus which greeted his appearance.

"Here's the doctor!" exclaimed Scott. "Now we'll get a first-hand diagnosis. 'What's the matter with Kelly'?"

True looked inquiringly around the circle. He could see that all was not well with his candidate. He had come to have a genuine affection for Tom,

admiring his honesty and frankness of speech, and enjoying his occasional flashes of humor. He had made repeated, although unsuccessful, attempts during the preceding two years to have Tom taken into the club, but he had persisted in his endeavor with a dogged determination, confident that, if Tom were only known to these men, they would be glad to include him in their circle. He knew that, with a few exceptions, they were at bottom simple and democratic and glad to recognize ability and character, but he knew also their fatal dislike of taking issue with one another, of seeming "to care," of insisting upon their own opinions—in a word—their moral inertia. He saw at once that the fight would be with Pennington and Catherwood.

"We can't afford *not* to take Kelly," he said with firmness, "because if we don't—when we know what a corker he is—it would stamp us for a lot of snobs."

"Hear! Hear!" interjected Scott, whose family were the most arrogant in the New York Social Register. He chuckled to himself at True's astute method of attack.

"The fact is," went on Tom's sponsor, "that the clubs out here are getting a bad name for just that reason. We do the best we can, of course, but what chance have we got to find out the really fine chaps from out West and down South."

"Lemons—most of 'em!" remarked Catherwood, again under his breath.

"We're three feet wide but only an inch thick," continued True. "We bore each other stiff—often enough—talking about the same dances, the same people, the same summer resorts, the same drinks, the same girls. Personally I'd like a little relief from Newport and the North Shore. I'd like a whiff of Puget Sound or the Gulf of Mexico."

"What's Kelly a 'whiff' of?" inquired Pennington innocently.

There was a subdued laugh.

"I'll tell you!" True turned on him. "He's a whiff of the salt air of the old Boston whose citizens threw their tea into the harbor rather than pay English duty! He's the same whiff that George the Third got in his nose in 1775. But he's more than that. He's a bully good chap that's had a hard row to hoe, not so much on account of what he didn't have as what he *did have.* He was born, as he says, 'on the wrong side of the street.' He's come from behind, but he's jumped to the front, and he's going to be the greatest tennis player this country ever produced. Why, if we didn't take him in, they'd say it was because his name was '*Kelly*'!"

"That's right!" cried out half a dozen of his auditors. "They would, too!"

"Bully for Frank!" exclaimed Scott. "What have you got to say, Pennington?"

The latter shrugged his shoulders.

"They *might* say that," he answered quietly. "I've no objection to taking him in, if——"

Suddenly True, who had been clinging rigid to the arms of his chair, fell heavily backward.

"By God! Water!" cried Dwight. "Frank's fainted. Send for old Doc. Wheeler!"

They loosened True's collar and wheeled him to the window, but it was several minutes before he opened his eyes. When Dr. Wheeler finally arrived he placed the lad in his buggy and drove him over to the dormitory, where Dwight and Crowninshield carried him up-stairs and laid him in bed.

"I'm coming 'round to-morrow to give you a talking to, young man!" he said severely, before leaving. "And you must promise to lie right here until I come. You fellows look after him. I shall hold you responsible."

The two big men sat awkwardly by the bedside for a long time—while True lay there with closed eyes—apparently asleep. Suddenly he said in a whisper: "Did—Tom—get in?"

"That's all right, Frankie, old man!" answered Crowninshield cheerfully. "He's as good as in. If that little saphead of a Sam makes any trouble I'll take him out and stick him under the pump."

"Don't worry," added Dwight. "Kelly's *got* to get in! That's all there is to it!"

So Kelly "got in"—at last.

XI

ONE evening, about ten days later, Tom was sitting alone in his jaundice-colored room grinding for his first-hour examination in economics. For a week or so after winning the college championship the previous spring he had lived in a rose-colored world and then, as nothing further had happened, he had relapsed into his erstwhile disgruntled state. After such a dazzling experience it had been unspeakably dull for him to be obliged to join his mother on her annual junket to the White Mountains, and that year the boarding-houses had seemed even more dreary than usual.

With a relief that was almost a joy he returned to Cambridge—to find, apparently, nothing changed. His success had made no difference. He was now a prominent figure in college athletics and yet there was not an additional door open to him. Of course, Mr. Russell and Evelyn had shown pleasure at his achievements, but his mother had felt it her duty to conceal any satisfaction which she may have felt, and had merely expressed the hope that it wouldn't turn his head!

Poor Tom, struggling hard to fight out his college course on the line Fate had selected for him, found

his championship dust in his mouth. He had had a vision of clouds of glory, and then the gray mists had drifted in again. He kicked viciously against the pricks of his dun-colored existence, and he kicked in vain. He had his place and there he must stay. So in a bitterly rebellious spirit he worked on—to what end he knew not. He was in a particularly recalcitrant frame of mind that night, and was on the point of chucking the whole thing in favor of a lonely trip to a musical show in Boston, when True tapped on his door. There was a queer look on his pale face.

"Some of the fellows want to see you over at the 'Woolsack'!" he said in a careless way.

Tom gazed sourly at him from under his green eye-shade.

"Me? What for? I don't——"

And then something in Frank's eyes set his heart athump.

"What do you mean?" he choked. He wouldn't be made a fool of again.

"Would you care to become a member?"

"You're not joking, Frank?"

"Why, of course not! I couldn't."

Tom got up and turned quickly to the window. So it had come at last! The "Woolsack"! One of the best of the clubs.

"Oh, Frank!" he said, trying to hide the quivering of his lips. "It's all *you!* I know it! You don't realize what this means to me! I've been so —lonely. Of course Harvard's a wonderful place,

but it's so infernally big—I've been lost in it, up to now!"

When Tom told his mother of his election to the "Woolsack" Mrs. Kelly was seriously upset. She had always heard of those college clubs as horrible places where the students did nothing but drink and play cards—"traps of Satan."

"Oh, Tom," she whispered in a terrified voice, "don't let them persuade you to drink. I don't mind smoking nearly so much, but *do* promise me not to drink!"

"Can't you trust me to behave like a gentleman, mother," blustered Tom disingenuously. He was in a state of almost hysterical excitement, had made up his mind already to do whatever the other fellows did! "Can't you trust me, *now?* If not, how can you *ever* trust me!"

She looked narrowly at him, her woman's instinct grasping the situation with unerring accuracy.

"Tom!" she said, in a desperate tone, "if you drank, it would break my heart!"

He did not reply and she turned quite cold. His next words frightened her even more.

"Could you manage to let me have a little money, mother?"

It was the first time he had ever asked for it. She knew that he appreciated the sacrifices she had made—was still making—to send him to college. Yet he was her only son! And secretly she

was supremely gratified by this recognition of his classmates.

"If you really need it," she answered, relieved herself that their conversation no longer hinged upon the depressing subject of drink. "I've got that five hundred dollars I saved up for a rainy day when you were at school."

"I don't need anything like that," he replied. "A couple of hundred, maybe. There's the dues and, you know, mother, I ought to get some new clothes."

"Clothes!" she cried sharply. "What's the matter with the clothes you've got on? Your father wore that blue coat of his fourteen years, and there wasn't a moth hole in it when he died. I should think you could get along as you are."

"Of course, I can't let 'em be ashamed of me."

"Ashamed of *you*, Tom. I guess they're mighty glad to get you to join."

He smiled to himself.

"And I've got to keep up my end."

"Not one cent will I give you for pleasure!" she insisted resentfully. "You can take my last cent for books—I *want* you to have every advantage! But nothing will I give you for—for cards—or tobacco—or liquor! Oh, Tom! You wouldn't take the money in the bank for that!" she asked in despair.

"No, mother," he answered a little guiltily. "But I must have *some* money." And then to change the subject and make her feel that by virtue of what

had happened life would be different for her as well, he added much as one would picture a coming pleasure to a child: "And, mother! I want you to meet the fellows! I'm going to bring some of them in here right away to see you—to supper, maybe!"

"Oh!" she uttered aghast. "Oh, I couldn't have them. There'd be nothing fit for them to eat! And they'd tell their mothers about it. There's Mrs. Dwight, for instance; she's in the 'Ladies Auxiliary.' I'd never dare look her in the face again—if her son came in here to supper and got only—ham!"

"I've no doubt Bridget could get up a very nice supper," replied Tom somewhat doubtfully.

He had not really intended to bring anybody to supper. It had simply seemed a natural sort of thing to say, and so he had said it. Now he perceived that it would involve social awkwardnesses. The fellows would come, to be sure, and be more than polite; but he could imagine Pennington and Catherwood if his mother said "You was" or "I should have thought you would have," and displayed as she certainly would her ignorance of social conventions. And he was almost sure that they didn't have any finger-bowls! No, it wouldn't do at all. Yet at the same time he knew perfectly well that nothing in the course of human events could possibly give his mother such satisfaction as to have the son of Mrs. Hamilton Dwight—Mrs. Dwight of Commonwealth Avenoo, that is—take a meal at her house. Such a social triumph would

have painted her drab existence with prismatic colors, and would have sufficed her as a topic of conversation forever afterward.

All this Tom knew very well, but—he just couldn't do it. And he must get the idea out of her head! He of course realized that what she had said was not meant to be taken seriously. It was merely a polite protest to be as politely overruled. All she needed—and expected—was a little urging, and then she would yield gracefully, for both of them were fully aware that Bridget could serve a very excellent "high tea" indeed—scalloped oysters, lobster salad, orange layer-cake, chocolate, just as good exactly as you'd get at "The Women's Exchange."

"No," she repeated, but looking hopefully at Tom's suddenly glum face, "I'd never dare! And then Mrs. West, too, over on Beacon Street. I pass her quite often. I might have to bow to her."

Already she had had a pathetic vision—a mirage, alas! of a gushing, if tiny spring, in the social Sahara of her existence, and her timid spirit fluttered in delicious perturbation. All Tom would have had to say to overcome her resistance would have been, "Oh, nonsense, mother! Give 'em anything you've got!" which, coupled with one of his accustomed hugs and a hearty kiss, would have swept away all her defenses, leaving only a faint little final "Oh, Tom! Do you *really* think we could?" And she would have hurried away to order the supper at once, and maybe have gone over to Fanny Trollop's

to see if she still had that celebrated recipe belonging to her Aunt Hemenway for tipsy pudding. But his response to her protest in the present instance was half-hearted.

"I suppose she *could* serve a good-enough supper," he repeated. "But, of course, if you would feel awkward or embarrassed about it, there's no need of having them. On the whole, I guess you're right."

He could see the expectant look in his mother's eyes give way to one of disappointment, and for a moment he almost felt like reconsidering. No, it was too much to expect. She would surely "queer" him with her talk about Uncle Ezra and Aunt Eliza. She might even mention "punkin' seeds"! But Mrs. Kelly had not given up all hope even yet. Tom had acted at first as if he had really meant it and perhaps——

"The rector said Bridget's scalloped oysters were the best he'd ever et!" she hazarded timidly.

"Oh, those fellows have oysters all the time!" he protested. "And they're used to having *dinner* at night."

"Dinner *at night!*" gasped Mrs. Kelly, bewildered.

"And when they go out to be entertained," he added unthinkingly, "they usually expect some sort of—of beverage."

His mother's face hardened.

"They'll never come to *my* house if they expect *that!*" she replied defiantly.

XII

TOM found the "Woolsack" a very agreeable place. He had always imagined that there was something mysterious about college social organizations, and that their meetings were given over to strange rites and alcoholic revelry, but he soon discovered that this was a mistake. The club was only a common meeting-ground, where the men loafed, read, played cards, and ordered such drinks as they chose. And the men themselves were as different from each other as the members of his own old circle. Indeed, in the main, he found among his new friends precisely the same types. Save for the fact that they were less assertive, spent more money, and had a larger knowledge of the world, Dick Crowninshield might have been Jo Cryder, Allyn Scott might have been Andy Peters, and either Pennington or Catherwood might have been J. Walton-Smith.

Most of them were quiet, rather reserved young fellows who had come from decent homes, and whose chief interest in life was athletics. As a whole, they were no more intellectual than his former friends, but he heard less cheap and dirty talk and the "Smart Alec" was conspicuous by his absence. There were no "freaks" among them and no g

niuses. They were satisfied with their college, their class, their club, and themselves, and seemed to feel that, so far as was immediately necessary, they had solved the problem of existence. There was no general conversation except regarding sport, the theatre, social doings in Boston, and the needless obstacles contrived by the dean and faculty to prevent their passing their examinations without mental labor. Their tone as to honesty, cleanliness in speech, generosity and consideration for others was high; as to personal conduct it was fairly easy-going. So long as a man acted like a gentleman with his comrades, they did not particularly concern themselves as to his habits. It was none of their business and it was "bad form" to be curious. It was "bad form" to get drunk, but curiously enough it was not bad form for *particular men* to get drunk. The "Woolsack" and some of the other clubs contained certain privileged characters who were regarded, with tolerance and even apparent pride, as "funny drunks." They were allowed to do as they liked so long as they remained amusing. And there were certain ones who led mysterious existences and were held in a kind of awe by the other men. These were generally fellows of the millionaire class, who had large personal incomes and lived lives of their own in which poker, champagne, and chorus girls were supposed to figure prominently. They were few in number. Almost every club had one of them and they ran together. There were, by antithesis to these, men of very

small means—like Tom—sons of professors and even of clergymen, and rich fellows who, nevertheless, took life seriously and were almost as much "grinds" as Ricker. To his great surprise Tom found that two of the members of the "Woolsack" were Phi Beta Kappa men, and that another held a John Harvard scholarship.

It comes to few college undergraduates to suffer for three long years from a bitter, if unjustified, sense of ostracism and then suddenly to be acclaimed as worthy of the highest social honors, of intimacy with the most popular and distinguished members of the class. When this does happen it is rarely the result of any particular achievement, athletic or otherwise, on the part of the individual, but is rather more often due to the efforts often unsuspected, of some friend. Thus, while the social recognition which he finally secured, including his election to the "Woolsack," was due primarily and directly to the merest chance—his fortuitous success at tennis—nevertheless without Frank True's persistent knocking at the door of friendship on his behalf, it would probably never have been opened to Tom.

When social success of this sort does come at the end of a man's college course it is far more likely to end disastrously than if it comes of its own accord in the natural course of events. Poor Tom, starved for want of real companionship, firmly believing that he had a well-founded grudge against existence, and bitterly resentful at being deprived of those

pleasures that he assumed were the common right of all young fellows of his age, found himself unexpectedly received as an intimate friend and equal by the very men toward whom he had harbored these feelings of resentment and antagonism. The result was, as is frequently the case, that he was knocked completely off his balance, and for a time was the victim of a state of almost hysterical excitement. His ego filled his cosmos. From the hell of solitude he had been lifted into the heaven of companionship. From regarding himself as an ugly duckling he came to view himself as a swan. He reasoned, and not unnaturally, that he must possess unusual qualities both physical and mental, unsuspected by himself, which differentiated him from the common herd with whom he had formerly been thrown. And yet, through some subtle instinct, or thanks to a lingering trace of common sense, he was astute enough to keep himself in the background and to endeavor so to conduct himself that his new friends should not regret their action.

Now that he occupied one of the seats of the mighty, he took pleasure in trying to justify the very exclusiveness of which he had formerly been the victim, the very social system which he had hitherto looked upon so resentfully as unfair and undemocratic. Yet, to his surprise, he discovered that, with the exception of one or two men such as Catherwood and Pennington, none of his new friends took the slightest satisfaction in the fact that they were thus artificially marked out and

separated from their fellows as members of a select club. There was nothing snobbish in their attitude at all. They liked to have a handy place where they and their intimate friends could meet, and this the "Woolsack" provided for them, just as the other clubs, the "Cave Dwellers" for instance, did for their members. But the mere fact that other men were not in the club, while they were, meant nothing to them. Strangely enough, while Scott and other men in the club seemed to feel that social conditions in college were not all that they should be and that the system might perhaps be improved, Tom championed it as the natural outcome of conditions over which no control could be exercised. Since the system had selected him, by that same token it must be all right.

As the months went on Tom found the society of his former companions less and less attractive. At first he continued to take his meals at the old table in Memorial Hall, but the fellows there were strangely cool. There was almost an atmosphere of hostility. Plainly they resented his being translated to a higher social atmosphere. Gradually they ceased entirely dropping into his room—all except J. Walton-Smith, who showered Tom with attentions, to the latter's great annoyance, and made a point of coming over every day after lunch to smoke a couple of pipes. In the end Tom resigned from Memorial and joined an eating club in Mt. Auburn Street to which West, Dwight, Scott, and others of his own club belonged, and

which also numbered many men from other societies. He got on well with all of them, but he found the "Woolsack" so attractive that he sadly neglected his work, and his expenses began to multiply. There was a good deal of poker played and Tom having learned the game could not resist the lure of the chips. At first he won—"beginner's luck"; then lost, and had to ask his mother for more money. Moreover his friendship with Scott and his desire to be a "good fellow" led him gradually into the use of alcohol. At first limiting himself to a cocktail before dinner, he soon yielded to the temptation to share the artificial gayety induced by whiskey. By the "mid years," he was drinking steadily. When his conscience reproached him he told himself fiercely that he was entitled to make up for the barrenness of his childhood and the misery of his first years in college, and that he ought to seize the opportunities offered by the "Woolsack" to cement friendship that in after-life might prove valuable. And because on a Saturday afternoon his breath often smelled of whiskey, he frequently gave up going home at all and spent the evening at the theatre with Scott and the next day snoozing before the fire at the club.

The talk he heard going on around him of the smart balls given in Boston and Brookline filled him with a desire to enlarge his outside social acquaintance. It would pay in the end. These years in college were a fellow's one great chance. Next year he might be slaving in an office. So he ordered

a new dress-suit costing a hundred dollars and arranged, through West, to have his name put on the list for the Assemblies. For the first time he drank of the joy of feminine adulation. Every pretty girl to whom he was introduced seemed to have heard about him; knew of his wonderful tennis-playing and his wizard serve, and was shyly eager to know him better. Poor Tom, intoxicated—as many another boy has been—by the admiring eyes of debutantes, lost his young head and for the time believed himself a conquering social hero. He abandoned his studies, spending night after night at dancing-parties in Boston and its suburbs. The house on Appian Way knew him rarely. He saw less and less of Frank True and, strangely enough, more and more of Catherwood and Pennington, who even found some social capital for themselves in his acquaintance.

He flunked two courses in the mid years, lost two hundred dollars at poker and another hundred trying to get it back, and drank more and more. He also became a confirmed smoker of cigarettes. By March he was in bad physical shape. "*Facile est descensus!*" Once started downward no one ever "descended" with more "facility" than poor Tom. He dared not go home. Could not bring himself to visit his little old mother patiently waiting for him in the shabby house on Newbury Street, whither an electric surface-car would have carried him in less than half an hour.

Thus a woman, retiring to the point of self-ef-

facement, distrustful of even her own ability to express her ideas grammatically, fearful of her own social shadow, and timidly shrinking from every contact with the world, was able to inspire actual moral terror by reason of her unfaltering, if primitive, belief in the duty imposed upon her toward her offspring by the Almighty. An interview with her was to be avoided at all costs. For, as she would have expressed it, God would have given her strength to make her son realize his sin. None are so terrible as the meek in righteous indignation. So Tom stayed away and his mother waited in silence, while he dropped postal cards to her at rare intervals, and tried to dim the vision of her in a constant succession of frivolities.

Seven weeks having elapsed since he had seen her, a determined knock brought him to his door one evening expecting to find Scott or Pennington outside on their way for an evening's fun in Boston. At first he did not recognize the tall strange figure standing there in the antique bonnet and camel's-hair shawl.

"It's me, Tom," answered the mellow, vibrant voice of Bridget the cook.

"Bridget! What on earth are you doing out here?" cried Tom in astonishment. Then his heart ceased beating for an instant and he felt almost faint with a sudden fear. "There—isn't—any bad news—is there?" he gasped. His poor old mother might be dead for all he knew.

"No, there's no bad news," answered Bridget.

"Will—will you come in?" he asked perfunctorily.

"Thank ye kindly," said Bridget. "No, I must be on my way. I was just after comin' back from a visit to me Cousin Annie, at Arlington—an' I thought I'd stop and ask about the wash, now yez hav given up bringin' it home."

"The wash is all right!" said Tom. "There's a Chinaman over in the Square; he comes for it."

"The dirty haythen! Don't give it to him, Tom, and him a-squirtin' the water on it out of his filthy mouth! Bring it home to me, Tom. And save your money!"

"The Chink is all right!"

He was torn between resentment at her coming and shame at seeing her. Her "Cousin Annie" and "the wash" were the most obvious prevarications. He felt her presence as a biting reproach and he wanted to get rid of her as speedily as possible. What would the fellows think if they should see her there and hear her address him as "Tom"? They might even conclude not unnaturally that she was an aunt or something. The thought had its reflexes in his muscles, and, as if by accident, he allowed the door to close a little. The gaunt old face gazed at him sadly across the threshold. Had he known it, her old heart yearned for his welfare almost as much as did his mother's, but he saw her austere features only those of a Nemesis.

"'Tis a grand room yez have, Tom!" she

without moving her eyes from his. "Almost as fine as the library at home. I mind the time your father bought all the furniture—the green-covered table and all! It seems only a week agone! And yer mither a lovely young lady! Her hair's white now, Tom. Yis, 'tis a grand room yez have! That was thirty years gone by! And I was a young girl meself, though ye may not believe it! I mind the very day ye was born, Tom, and Dr. Tucker asking for the scales, and yer poor father locking himself out of doors — God rest his soul! I've seen ye grow up, Tom, and no one so well as I knows all yer mither has done for ye. Not that yez have been aught but a good boy! I knew ye love yer mither. But life is life. And sometimes 'tis sorrowful, and sometimes 'tis happy thanks to the Blessed Virgin! But never did any mither care for her gossoon like yours, Tom, and many's the time I've helped put the ile on yer small back and rubbed yer feet wid the alcohol. And now she's an old woman, and her eyes are dim wid watchin' out of the window fer yez to come home, and her hearin's a bit bad for strainin' to hear the sound of yer voice, and her forehead has the wrinkles on it fer worryin' fer fear all may not be well wid ye. 'Tis a dear, little mither yez have, Tom. Some day ye'll not have her. She and I will both be gone before long. I'm payin' my own debt now to her, Tom. 'Twill be too late then to pay yours."

What response Tom might have made to this appeal cannot be told, for at that instant a step

sounded on the gravel outside and Pennington sprang into the hall.

"Ah there, Tom!" he cried heartily, stepping quickly in front of Bridget as if she were totally invisible. "I've got two seats for Lulu Glaser in 'The Lion Tamer.' They were turned in at the agency at the last moment and 'Davie' at the club snapped 'em right up for me. Come along! Don't waste any time either! It's a great show. Bobo French has been sixteen times!"

Bridget's appeal had really moved Tom's heart, but, instinctively tactful as it had been, he still felt that she had had no business to interfere—especially to come out there to Cambridge to see him. Should he comply with her tacit request to come home it would be a direct acknowledgment of the propriety of her conduct. He now actually wanted to go home, but he wanted also to go to the theatre with Pennington, who was becoming more and more friendly. He hastily decided that he would go in the next morning and surprise his mother by joining her at church. That would be just as good. It would make up for everything, and, besides, his mother could not talk to him during the service. It would break the ice splendidly.

"Sure, I'll come," he said to Pennington. "I'll only be a minute!"

His friend was lighting a cigarette over the l and Tom made signs to Bridget that he wished h to leave him. She remained mute, but her li

moved in a final silent appeal. He shook his head sternly at her.

"Good night," he said coldly. "Thank you for coming out. I'll be in before long, and bring the wash myself."

A deep flush spread itself over Bridget's dignified features. She drew herself up proudly and turned away without a word.

"Who's that old party?" inquired Pennington.

"Servant from home about the wash," answered Tom. "Damn nuisance, too. Imagine her coming at this hour!"

Yet the vision of his mother as conjured up by Bridget remained with him for a long time, for Tom did not go to church next day.

XIII

TOM'S demoralization progressed with such rapidity that it soon became evident to his clubmates that unless he called a halt he could expect neither to graduate with his class nor to hold his title as tennis champion. True, deeply grieved at his indifference and general conduct, had long since given up any attempt to influence him, but now Dwight, the president of the class, realizing that something must be done, took him in hand. Catching the new member at an unguarded moment, he gave him to understand that his associates were by no means pleased at the apparent effect of his election upon his character. It made it seem, he told Tom, as if the club's influence were a bad one. But most of all Tom owed it to himself and to his mother to pull himself together and finish his college course with what credit he could.

Deeply chagrined, Tom took his medicine with meekness, forswore all dances and drinking, and by heroic exertions managed both to retain his title and take his degree. He had, at last, renewed his practice of going home on Sundays, and for a time he seemed to his mother more like his old self —the rather shabby but virile self that she loved —but once the examinations were over and he had

successfully escaped the yawning jaws of failure, the longing for something different came upon him again. After all, he had had, he assured himself, little enough pleasure in college. He had made The "Woolsack" too late for it to do him any particular good. What he had read of the great world outside—of New York and Newport—filled him with a keen desire to see it for himself, taste of its pleasures and perhaps of its victories. Was he not the champion tennis-player of the university? He must go to Newport to enter the lists for the national title. Even if he did not win, he would at least see Newport. Who could tell what might be in store for him? So when Allyn Scott suggested casually that he had better come to them for a month in the middle of the summer and get "acclimated" for the national tournament, Tom accepted the invitation with alacrity and without consulting his mother. She, poor lady, was nearing the Valley of the Shadows. But she only entered a feeble protest to Tom's declaration that he intended to spend a month or so at Newport.

"But you don't expect me to go there, do you?" she asked timidly.

"Oh, no, of course not!" he answered. "You wouldn't want to be staying at a boarding-house in a place where I was visiting."

His unexpressed idea—none the less patent to her—was that it would be embarrassing for him to have her there—might involve introductions or other complications; it would be much better for

her to go to East Bethlehem, or some one of those places, where he could join her later on in the summer, the early part of which he intended to spend at Cambridge in a rigorous preparatory course of physical training. Unseen by her son the old lady's eyes filled with tears. She was proud of Tom's tennis-playing, and she had hoped that he would express the wish to have her present in Newport at the tournament. But he advanced no suggestion of the kind. His mind was already glamoured of the unknown. So Mrs. Kelly made her modest preparations to spend the summer by herself. It was significant that for the first time in the history of their relations Bridget offered to accompany her in the capacity of maid, but the offer was refused. With a pang in the heart Mrs. Kelly recognized the fact that her influence over Tom was gone—that he was drifting away from her.

Class day came with its flowers, its swarms of little girls and their mammas, its lemonade, its salad, and its diluted punch. Across the Yard, between the trees, hung row on row of Chinese lanterns. Seniors in cap and gown hurried ostentatiously from building to building, or escorted nervous damsels, with elaborate courtesy, to the various exercises. The sedate old college, at all other seasons the quintessence of conservatism, to-day exhibited a shocking degree of frivolity. There were white dresses everywhere—with blue, red, green, and

pink sashes that hit the onlooker violently between the eyes. The elmed arcades "where the good and the great in their glorious prime" had "musingly trod," presented an appearance about as dignified and an atmosphere of culture nearly as rare as a country circus. Perspiring negroes carrying huge "cans" of ice-cream staggered hither and thither. Strange processions of country cousins meandered down the paths or across the grass, convoyed by self-conscious seniors. Young gentlemen who for four years had been assumed to be connected with only the choicest of Beacon Street families, and whose raiment and diction had indicated that beyond peradventure they were of the Brahmin caste, suddenly appeared in the company of the most peculiar-looking relations. In fact the "showdown" had come. No longer could pretense avail. In a word, one had to stand or fall by one's relatives.

At the "Woolsack," as at all other self-respecting clubs, a cold feast or "spread" (as it is still called) had been prepared, to which the graduating members bade whom they wished—Mr. Russell and Evelyn were there, and Mrs. Kelly. It was the sole occasion upon which Tom's mother, profiting by her son's elevation in the world, had made her appearance among his new friends, and she came with the utmost reluctance, apprehensive lest she might do or say something which would militate to his disadvantage. But Tom and Frank True between them managed to make her feel a little

at home, and after taking her to the "Tree," where half-clad giants battled for flowers, and to the club-house, where she partook of tea, ice-cream, and salad, surrounded by the elite of Boston society, they placed her on a car bound for Boston, her cup of happiness, for the time being at least, filled to overflowing.

Under the circumstances it is hardly surprising that Tom's youthful fancies lightly turned to those thoughts commonly supposed to be induced by spring. During his recent social career he had, indulged in several trifling flirtations with Back Bay debutantes, and he had gained a confidence which he had lacked earlier in his college course. To-day the sight of Evelyn had revived in him all those emotions which he had felt on first meeting her in the Yard. Truly, she was a slender, dark-eyed goddess—a Diana or a Hebe—compared with those other giggling little girls. Hitherto he had assumed that she had already given her affections to Frank True, yet unconsciously he had all the while cherished a faint hope that he might prove wrong. Three years had passed since he had first enshrined her in his heart, and while perhaps the fire upon the altar lacked something of the intensity of the first fierce blaze into which it had burst upon the unexpected renewal of their childhood's acquaintance, it burned none the less steadily. Evelyn herself, however, had shown no inclination to encourage sentiment. Wisely she had eschewed the personal note, while Tom had recognized that

marriage, so far as he was concerned, was absolutely out of the question. In deference to his mother's wishes, he had intended to follow in his father's footsteps and become a member of the bar. Should this purpose be carried out it would mean three more years at the Harvard Law School and an apprenticeship of from three to five years in a law office in Boston before he could hope to support a wife in anything much better than a polite poverty. He certainly had no reasonable expectation of being able within a period of less than ten years to offer Evelyn home comforts such as she then enjoyed.

Thus his attitude toward Evelyn perforce became more that of a friend than of a lover—which was probably, in any event, all she would have permitted it to be.

But, now, on this his Class Day his heart's hope revived. After all he had no definite reason to believe that she was engaged to Frank. To be sure, the latter was always at the Russell's house, but for that matter, so was *he*. And after all Frank was nothing but a cripple, charming fellow as he was. Moreover, he himself was a far more desirable *parti* than when he had first known her. Then he had been a shabby sort of dark horse—a social derelict, almost a grind. Now he was the college tennis champion, a member of an ultra smart club, a popular man. That might easily make a difference—*the* difference.

Class Day was the day when everybody "got

engaged." In all the novels and stories about university life which he had read, the collegian hero always selected Class Day as the opportune moment for protesting his undying affection for his beloved. It was true that for Tom college fiction had proved but a poor *camera obscura* of actual conditions, nevertheless, it had had its influence upon his ideas. If he didn't propose to Evelyn on Class Day, some other fellow probably would, and who knew *what* she might do? No, he must not only square himself with her for past neglect, but he must make up for it by then and there offering her his heart and hand.

And, indeed, what more opportune occasion for words of love can there ever be than that offered by the evening hours of Class Day to the couple wandering among the shadows of the overarching elms? For young Mr. Smith the future lies stretched out—a plain, well-marked highway—leading across comfortable and smiling valleys to the mysterious and happy mountains of Fame and Fortune. He is full of the egotism and enthusiasm of youth. He is ignorant of the mocking insincerities of the world. He feels his strength as the strength of ten, because his heart is pretty nearly pure. To young Miss Jones he is a warrior going forth to combat, certain of victory, of popular applause, of glory. They are sitting, perhaps, in the cushioned window of his room, where probably mamma or aunty with discreet intention has left them to themselves. Below them, in the gentle

night wind the Chinese lanterns sway and blink among the leaves, yellow lights flicker in a hundred windows, vague figures, hand in hand or arm in arm, glide among the tree trunks or sit close together upon the stone steps of the old buildings, and from the end of the Yard the last strains of "Fair Harvard," played by a sentimental regimental band from Cambridgeport, linger and die slowly away.

How could any well-regulated senior escape a declaration under such circumstances? Otherwise what business would he have to sit at such a time in a cushioned window with any girl? Thus, following the line of least resistance, many an innocent collegian finds himself enmeshed in the net of matrimony before he has as yet fairly determined how he is going to earn his bread and butter.

Tom stood beside Evelyn as she sat ensconced on the window-seat of his room in Thayer's Hall and the last lines of the college song sung by three thousand young voices faded out of hearing. She seemed deeply stirred as, with lips slightly parted, she gazed through the trees to where the distant musicians were disbanding. They had not spoken for several minutes. In the dim reflections cast by the lanterns among the branches, her face had the same sweet allurement that it had had when, after ten years, he had seen her for the first time in the flickering firelight of her father's study. He felt a sudden and overpowering tenderness, which coincided with an instinctive recognition

that this was the appropriate moment for what must necessarily be a purely factitious demonstration. He could not marry! He knew it! An indefinite engagement? What right had he to ask it of her? And yet he felt convinced from the palpitation of his heart and the trembling in his limbs that he loved Evelyn whether he had any business to tell her so or not. Perhaps she expected him to tell her. What harm would it do anyway? He must speak now—before she turned her head—or it would be too late. He could never speak looking straight into those eyes. So Tom Kelly, moved both by a pardonable emotion and a literary sense of the fitness of things, threw his fate into the balance and said in a strange and peculiar voice, in which excitement, embarrassment, and tenderness figured equally:

"Evelyn, I love you! You know I love you!"

At this point in the story-books the senior inevitably places his arm around the waist of the girl in the window, who thereupon leans her head against his manly shoulder and bursts into tears. But in this particular presentation of the ancient college drama the leading lady failed to follow her cue.

Tom had no sooner uttered the words than he appreciated the fatuity of the occasion which he had selected for his purpose. With a hundred times better grace could he have spoken them six months before! He had deliberately neglected Evelyn for half a year, and in the face of that

neglect he was assuming to ask her to be his wife—on the strength of what? His membership in the "Woolsack"? His college championship? His wasted opportunities? His winter of frivolity? With a sudden fall in his blood temperature, he grasped the fact that he had been guilty of an inexcusable presumption. What had Evelyn said or done to justify him in the belief that this sudden declaration would be acceptable to her? Was it not, under the circumstances, almost an affront? And in the same instant he perceived the real depth of his feeling for her and cursed himself for having jeopardized his chances by speaking at such a time. If only he could have recalled his words! Why did she not reply? Had he, in truth, offended her?

For Evelyn did not reply. She seemed to be watching something fixedly among the trees and to be oblivious of what he had said. The moments passed—hours they seemed to Tom—and still she did not speak. Had she, in fact, failed to hear him? Or was she deliberately ignoring his remarks as the kindest thing to do? The blood leaped tumultuously to his neck and face. Oh, what a fool he was!

Then Evelyn lifted her head, smiling radiantly, tenderly, at some one. There was a crunching on the gravel outside the window and a shadow limped forward out of the darkness.

"Hello, Evelyn!" came the cheery voice of Frank True out of the shadows. "Hello, Tom!"

And once again our hero's universe rocked and all but toppled.

"Hello—Frank, dear!" answered Evelyn softly.

A week later, upon the platform of Saunder's Theatre, Tom, with his assembled classmates in cap and gown, received from the president of the university an imitation parchment degree and was proclaimed at the same moment as thenceforth belonging to the "Brotherhood of Educated Men." The fact of the matter was that, although so christened by America's most distinguished educator, Tom was not an educated man; he was an imitation educated man, who, to be sure, though spurious, was by no means a bad counterfeit of what he was declared to be. Of culture in its true sense he had none. The warehouse of his brain had merely been equipped with a large variety of intellectual window-dressings. For four years he had wandered lackadaisically through college electives chosen with no systematic purpose except to secure a degree with a minimum amount of work and the maximum amount of leisure. He could talk with a certain glibness about Chaucer, Beaumont, Fletcher, and Thomas Love Peacock; or of Kant, Hegel, and Schopenhauer. He had taken elementary courses in mediæval history, economics, fine arts, music, psychology, ethics, architecture, Shakespeare, the English poets and novelists, botany, zoology, geology, French, German, and chemistry. He had pursued no subject with thoroughness, and what

knowledge he had was superficial. He had attended the smallest number of lectures demanded by the authorities, done the least amount of reading permissible, and passed his examinations simply by cramming his head, for temporary purposes only, during a three weeks' period at the end of each term. As a result his mind had lost most of its power of concentration.

He had no real philosophy and no genuine theory of morals. After the inevitable Freshman excitement over the problem of why he should not "go on the loose," he had relapsed into a state of moral indifference. He had glanced over the works of several celebrated agnostics offered for his delectation by his friend Peters, and he had perused, at the suggestion of Mr. Russell, several utilitarian and materialistic works by Locke, Mill, and others, but they had helped him to no conclusion, and to his confused state of mind, science and religion seemed to have fought a drawn battle. One philosophy seemed about as convincing as another. He had lost all faith in the God or Gods of his childhood, and the theological dogmas imbibed at the same period seemed to him no longer to have any significance. He recognized the beauty of religion, yet questioned the existence of a religious instinct. Yet through this tangled forest of doubt and scepticism some unnamed influence drew him toward a well-marked path of right conduct. And, in the main, Tom followed it, although he could not have told why.

What, then, had Tom achieved by the four years spent in Cambridge? Very little, it must be confessed. He had, during the first three years, at least gained in health and strength of body. He had acquired a trifling amount of trifling information upon a variety of subjects, most of which he had forgotten as quickly as he had learned it. He had, it is true, somewhat broadened his knowledge of life, but such a broadening would have followed as a matter of course, even had he not gone to college. In a word, it may be doubted whether, under the elective system of twenty years ago, Tom Kelly was any better off intellectually on leaving Harvard than when he entered it. Morally he was worse off. One attribute, however, he had in common with most of his associates in the "Woolsack"—he enunciated the English language distinctly and had a creditably large and accurate vocabulary. To this extent his education had not been an entire failure. But Tom had not been happy, which it is not only the prerogative but the duty of youth to be.

XIV

THE smart brougham carrying Tom Kelly to "Beausejour," the Newport summer home of the Scotts, rolled up the crushed blue-stone drive, set with blue Californian spruce to match, rounded the flower-bordered circle and came to a stop before the portico. The groom, a dapper little Englishman, who reminded Tom strikingly of Pennington, jumped down from his seat beside the pink-faced coachman and whipped open the door with a quick touch of his cap. Both men were dressed in immaculate livery and both seemed scornfully impersonal.

It was Tom's second visit to Newport, and its contrast with the first had been vividly in his mind as, reclining upon the soft cushions, he had been whirled proudly up Rhode Island Avenue. Now he felt quite at ease. He was fully aware that his tailor, to whom he was heavily in debt, had made a good job of him, and that his new blue-serge suit fitted his figure to a nicety. Around his straw hat was a colored band indicating to the world that he was one of the elect of Harvard, and on his hands, or rather in one hand, was a pair of those very yellow chamois gloves that had so aroused his contempt

when adorning the hands of Catherwood in the gallery of Memorial Hall only three short years before. The wheel of his fortunes had certainly revolved since those dull days, and now he was triumphantly atop of it. He remembered how he and his mother, taking their afternoon strolls, she with her tiny black sunshade acock, had paused before those very granite pillars bearing the insignia of "Beausejour," and gazed timidly up the driveway through which he, a welcome guest, had just been swept in regal state. Then, they had been in momentary apprehension lest some gardener or other functionary should tell them to move along. Now, the very gates swung open at his approach. It made him think of that vocal exercise their old instructor in Freshman elocution had given them. He had been a well-meaning but rather ridiculous little man who, placing his finger-tips upon the point of his swelling waistcoat directly above his navel, was accustomed to say in a voice pregnant with adenoids:

"Remember, gentlemen, the abdomen is the centre of the personality. Now, after me, gentlemen!"

Then he would intone in a hollow bellow:

"O-pen—wide your—gates!

"King John—your King and England's—doth appro-o-ach!"

Tom laughed, mentally substituting "King Tom" for "King John."

"O-pen wide—your gates!" he had chanted in a

whisper, as they had rolled toward the house. "King Tom—your King and Newport's—doth approach!"

He was a little in doubt as to whether he should slip the little groom anything or not, but concluded that there was no indication of expectancy in the man's manner. So he sprang out of the brougham, nodding a "Thank you," and reached back for his racket-cases. The groom had them, however, and was already engaged in handing them, together with his new pigskin English kit-bag, to the footman in blue livery who had mysteriously appeared from behind one of the marble pillars. The carriage drove away, leaving him standing in the full glare of the afternoon sun on the red tiles of the white stucco porch. A tall gray-haired man now emerged from the doorway.

"Mrs. Scott is resting," said he respectfully, "and both gentlemen are out on the water. Will you go to your room, sir?"

It was but four o'clock of a brilliant July day, and rich odors from the near-by garden floated across the driveway. Tom had expected Allyn to meet him. It was a pity to waste such a beautiful afternoon. He might have got in a few practice sets of tennis. Still, the footman seemed to think he ought to go to his room, and the fellow probably knew. The heavy shadows of the massive hall were almost chilly after the heat of the roadway and it was quite dark in there. He made out a huge white marble fireplace, in imitation of the one

at Blois, and some white marble seats, upon which were thrown with elaborate carelessness a few crimson velvet cushions. Up a broad, thickly carpeted staircase he followed the footman to a landing leading to the "bachelor's wing," and thence down a long silent hall to the end, where a door was standing ajar.

"In here, sir," said the man, preceding him.

Tom inspected with amazement his new training quarters—the "royal suite," or whatever it might be called. He had had no previous conception of the opulence of his friend's family. A bright Indian rug covered two-thirds of the polished hardwood floor. Over a wide fireplace hung a stag's head—a "royal"—an ivory tag giving the place and date of its execution: "Dunrobin, September 21, 1893." Dainty cerise-silk curtains hung from the valanced windows, and the single "two-thirds" bed was covered with a spread of the same material. Where the pillow should have been, according to the etiquette of Newbury Street, was a round bolster also of silk. There were easy chairs of leather and wicker, a polar-bear rug lay in front of the fireplace, and engravings of English beauties alternating with sporting prints, hung over the bed and along the walls. A round table offered the current weekly and monthly magazines placed in neat, overlapping rows, and, lest they should prove too intellectually exhausting, agai the wall was a sort of sideboard ranged on which were boxes of cigars and cigarettes of different

brands and sizes, and a row of decanters with a bucket of cracked ice and aerated waters.

"Whew!" thought Tom. "This is pretty soft!"

"The bath is here, sir," said the man, opening another door.

"Oh, very well," answered Tom, not knowing whether it was *comme il faut* to express appreciation of one's accommodations in a friend's house. "Holy Mike!" was what he in fact remarked to himself at sight of the "bath." It was an enormous room, tiled from floor to ceiling, and fitted with every known device for cleansing and refreshing the human body. Showers, sitz and needle baths supplemented the more plebeian services of a porcelain tub raised on silver claws and standing in the middle of a white glazed desert. French soaps in sealed packages lay at hand and a series of glass rods held woolly Turkish towels as big as tablecloths. It made Tom want to strip at once. And he had already resolved to have a drink as soon as he should be left alone. The valet finished arranging the contents of the valise upon the dressing-table and in the wardrobe and, having asked Tom for his trunk-check, announced that Mrs. Scott always had tea at five on the terrace, and then withdrew. Tom examined everything all over again with great enjoyment.

"Golly!" he repeated under his breath. "This is all right. Pretty soft, eh?" And, as he took in appreciatively the fine points of a steel-engraved Grecian lady coyly emerging from the Ionian Sea

without any dampness being visible upon her polished limbs, his mind reverted for an instant with grim satisfaction to the tin tub shared in rotation by the boarders at the "Mountain Home House." Then he stepped over to the window-seat and looked out upon a rose-garden in full bloom.

A marble sun-dial stood in the centre and on a bench in the shade of a high green border sat a young woman apparently reading. The sight of her set Tom's heart thumping, for she seemed to him the most beautiful, ethereal creature he had ever seen. She was a slender brunette, and her dark hair was curiously arranged like a huge halo above her heavily pencilled eyebrows. Just at that moment, as if moved to retrospection by something she had been reading, she looked up and their eyes met. Hers were soft, brown, and startled. She blushed slightly, gave an almost imperceptible acknowledgment of his presence by a slight inclination of her head, and looked swiftly down again. Tom, feeling guiltily that he had violated a maiden's privacy, hastily backed away from the window. But his blood was all astir and his pulses beat in unruly turmoil. Who was she? Well, he'd find out at tea time, anyhow! He poured out a drink for himself, and, selecting a small, *claro* cigar of an unusual shape, he lit it and then threw himself back luxuriously in one of the leather chairs. The whole thing seemed a wonderful enchantment. The house was like the palace of the Sleeping Beauty—only she was not sleeping. He wondered

what she would look like asleep! How black that riot of hair would look against a pillow! After a time he arose from the chair and glanced stealthily out of the other window. She was gone. The shadow of the hedge had crept across the green where stood the sun-dial. He almost doubted that she had been there. A humming-bird came and hovered uncertainly for a moment just beneath him, and then likewise disappeared. From a distance he could hear the soft vibrations of a piano whenever the unseen player struck the upper notes. He looked at his watch and discovered that it was already a quarter to five.

"Fallen on your feet this time, Tommy, old boy!" he again congratulated himself, wondering what it cost to run such an establishment. And he was getting the whole benefit of it for nothing!

He washed his face and hands, brushed his hair and, having put on a clean collar and fresh tie, ventured forth to find the "terrace." A footman arose from out of the shadows in the front hall and directed him through a drawing-room crowded with bric-à-brac and ornate furniture to the opposite side of the house, where a lawn sloped gradually away from a veranda lined with Chinese vases full of flowering shrubs. Near a flight of stone steps leading to another grassy slope he could see a couple of ladies sitting beside a wicker table on which shone various articles of silver. The thought of approaching them alone and announcing himself filled him with terror and he doubled back to the

veranda. He was on the point of fleeing to the protection of the "bachelor wing" when he heard voices in the hall and saw Allyn coming through the drawing-room in the company of two other men.

"Hello, Allyn!" he said, going to meet them.

"Hello, Tom!" answered his friend. "We've been off on the *Siren* to judge a race—otherwise I'd have been here to meet you. Father—this is Tom Kelly."

The tall man with narrow face, high, arched nose and pale-gray eyes, who had followed Allyn to the veranda, bowed rather stiffly and held out his hand for Tom to shake. His manner was perfunctorily courteous, but detached, and he gave the impression of being somewhat bored with the particular thing which he happened to be doing but in hope that the next might prove more entertaining.

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Kelly," he remarked. And then added hastily: "Yes, yes, we must get out to tea or your mother will accuse us of *lese-majesty*."

"And Mr. Parradym—Mr. Kelly," added Allyn.

The third gentleman struck Tom instantly as being of an entirely different and novel type. He was rather stout, neatly but not smartly dressed, and had a red, good-natured face with a large inquiring nose and kindly, rather watery, blue eyes.

"Oh, yes, Mr. Kelly—to be sure!" said he, giving Tom's hand a warm pressure. "The coming champion, we understand."

Tom soon learned that Mr. Parradym never referred to himself and always included all those present in his conversation.

The three, led by Allyn, crossed the terrace, and descended the steps to the tea-table.

"Mother, this is Tom Kelly," repeated Allyn, addressing a slender harmony in mauve. The lady bowed graciously, using her lorgnette.

"My sister—Mrs. Wingate—" continued Allyn.

Tom turned and found himself bowing to the girl of the rose-garden. A married woman! She held out her hand, giving him an intense, eager look. There was something appealing in her brown eyes, a note of pathos, as if she vaguely sought protection.

"You were in the rose-garden!" exclaimed Tom. "I disturbed you! I'm sorry!"

Allyn laughed cynically, and the girl flashed a look of annoyance at him.

"You can usually find Lulie in the rose-garden when there are guests in the bachelor wing!" he remarked banteringly.

Mrs. Scott made an impatient gesture, and said something to her daughter in French which Tom did not understand. He had abandoned French after his Freshman year. Whatever it was, it caused Mrs. Wingate to flush and bite her lips. She looked helplessly at Tom and made a slight gesture with her shoulders as if she knew that he would understand. Instantly his instinct of chivalry was aroused and he would have come valiantly to

her support could he have thought of anything to say. It was very rude of Allyn and cruel of his mother!

"We had quite a pretty race," said Mr. Parradym, rescuing the situation. "The *Alethea* won by less than a length!"

"By the way—what are the orders for to-night?" inquired Mr. Scott of his wife.

"You and I are dining with the Overtons. Allyn and Lulie are going to the Welfleets', and I accepted an invitation for Mr. Kelly to dine at the Fanshaws'," she answered.

Tom was appalled.

"I—really," he began, totally aghast, "I don't know Mrs. Fanshaw—I haven't met her!"

"That's nothing!" Mr. Scott informed him. "You are what is known as an 'available man.' You not only can dine out every night—you *must* dine out every night."

"Cheer up," urged Mr. Parradym. "I'm dining there myself and it's not half bad. Lots of worse places. And Fanshaw has some very excellent old Madeira."

"I should die!" groaned Tom quite naturally, and the others laughed in spite of themselves. "*Can't* I stay at home?"

"Look here, mother," suggested Allyn suddenly, "I have it. Let Lulie chaperon Tom to the Welfleets' and I'll take in the Fanshaws'. They'll never know the difference. The Welfleets would much rather have him, anyway—he's something new."

"And give you a chance to make love to Mimi Fanshaw!" shot back his sister at him.

"Well," said Mrs. Scott, "if it would make Mr. Kelly any more comfortable not to go alone—of course nobody cares, really; it will surely be all right—if you prefer?"

Tom glanced quickly at Mrs. Wingate and something told him that she would not be displeased if he accepted Allyn's suggestion. Already he felt as if some secret bond of sympathy existed between them.

"If I have to go out I'd much prefer to go that way," he answered. "Honestly, I'd feel like a cat in a strange garret—I shall, anyway."

"Only there'll be another cat there that you know!" chuckled Allyn.

And again Tom could find no words.

The butler and two footmen now made their appearance for the purpose of removing the tea things, and Mr. Scott decided that he must go and write some letters. They all accordingly arose. Mrs. Scott affably informed Tom that it was a great pleasure to have him with them and then, nodding to the others, walked stiffly off beside her husband.

"What happens now?" wondered Tom. It was only half after five—the coolness of the evening was creeping through the garden—the shadows reaching out across the grass—the loveliest hour of the day.

"Do you play bridge?" asked Mrs. Wingate.

"No," answered Tom, feeling very stupid, "I never learned."

"What a shame!"

Emboldened by her tone, he asked: "Will you teach me?"

"I'd love to," she answered. "Anything you like."

"She knows all sorts of games," said Allyn significantly. "By George, Lulie!" he whistled, "you and I promised to go over to the Langhorns at five-thirty. We're late now! Come along."

"Some other time, then," murmured Tom. She held out her hand, and as he pressed it, she turned away leaving, as it were, a precious possession for a moment in his clasp.

"You two fellows will have to take care of yourselves, Parry," remarked Allyn. "Why don't you take Kelly down to the Club?"

"Oh, I'd rather stay here and smoke a cigarette," answered Tom. "That is, if Mr. Parradym doesn't mind."

In truth he wished to learn without delay everything there was to know about Mrs. Wingate. Was there a Mr. Wingate, for example? She was not in black—could not be a widow.

He took Parradym's offered cigarette, unconsciously inspecting the brand.

"You needn't be afraid," laughed the other. "They're Scott's—not mine. And I tell him where to buy 'em—so I know they're all right. Yes," he added with a dry smile. "I'm a little brother

to the rich. You might as well know it now as later."

Tom was so taken aback by this extraordinary frankness that all he could do was to ask lamely: "Are you staying here?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Parradym. "I usually spend July here. Have for the last fifteen years. It's a very comfortable house and quite all right in most ways! Besides, our hostess is an excellent executive, and gives her husband his orders every morning—all of us, in fact."

They had strolled the length of the terrace and instinctively had turned down another flight of steps leading into a grassy corner from which they could see the breakers surging against the rocks.

"And now to answer your question about Mrs. Wingate——"

"I didn't ask you anything about her," interrupted Tom.

"Oh, didn't you? Well, excuse me, but everybody does want to know about Mrs. Wingate—yes, she *has* a husband, really a very good sort of fellow, too. But they don't get on for some reason—several reasons, and as she has three millions of her own she manages without him very well."

"Are they divorced?"

"No—not so far as I am aware," answered Parradym. "But substantially so. Only, as there is no question of either alimony or the custody of children, they never have thought it necessary to go to court."

Tom said nothing. It was certainly no concern of his what domestic arrangements the Wingates might choose to make and yet for some reason he was disappointed. His dream had faded into nothing.

"But there are others!" murmured Mr. Parradym, as if to himself.

Tom began to be secretly annoyed with his cheery faced fellow guest. What right had Parradym to assume that he had taken any sudden romantic interest in Mrs. Wingate?

"You wonder what business it is of mine?" said his new friend. "None. Except in so far as a case-hardened old social parasite ought to try to keep the game on a fair basis, and give the players the benefit of his experience. You don't know me. I've heard a little about you. I know more than you think from looking at you. I'm a friend of the family and I'm a friend to all nice young fellows. We all have our faults and we all ought to be charitable toward others. But this is rather a dangerous house, between you and me, for a young chap to start in."

Tom's annoyance had deepened into mild indignation. Let this comfortable old "parasite," as he admitted that he was, speak for himself and not for others! He was about to let drop some hint of this sort, when Mr. Parradym laid his hand gently on Tom's shoulder.

"What a wonderful sight!" he said, pointing out toward the open sea. It was true. The

had fallen until the ocean lay undulating in long streaks of near-colors, off-shades of purple, yellow, blue, and crimson—like watered silk. A mile away the snowy sails of a square-rigged yacht reflected the dazzling light of the setting sun. All was still save for the slow splash of the waves against the rocks and the chirp of birds in the bushes about them. Overhead the sky was an arc of deepest blue.

"This is the real immortality!" muttered Parradym.

Tom was only conscious that his associate had said something. He was looking, to be sure, in the direction of the sea, but all he saw was the appealing face of Lulie Wingate.

"I beg your pardon—what was it you said?" he asked.

XV

"Got everything you want?"

Allyn had popped his head in at the door of Tom's room, where he found the latter assisted by a valet hastily getting into his dress clothes. In reality the valet was only in the way, since Tom had not the remotest idea what use to make of him and found it very inconvenient when he wanted to put on his trousers to have the fellow clinging to their legs. It seemed almost as much of a "stunt" to get into them as to leap through a hoop, but he presently discovered that, after you had inserted your leg, the valet released that particular trouser at the precise moment requisite to enable you to get it through to the floor instead of leaving the limb suspended in mid-air. Even then the process savored of skipping rope.

"You bet I have—and more!" answered Tom, buttoning his suspenders in front while the valet performed that office for him behind. "I hope I'm not late?"

Allyn took out a small watch the thickness of a cheese-knife.

"It's only eight o'clock," he said. "The carriages aren't ordered until quarter past."

"Don't you dine at eight?"

"Oh, nobody ever gets anywhere before eight-thirty. What would be the use? Some one would be sure to be late and keep everybody else waiting."

Allyn filled himself a glass of whiskey and soda from the sideboard, and lit a cigarette at the alcohol-burner.

"Lord, yes! Time to burn! Have a drink?" Tom nodded. "Give Mr. Kelly a Scotch-and-soda," Allyn added to the valet, who having obeyed, removed himself.

"Here's how!" remarked Tom, taking a long pull at his glass. Smacking his lips, he gazed appreciatively around the apartment. "By the way, who is Parradym?" he asked casually.

"Parradym? Oh, he's a good-natured, easy-going sort of chap—rather cynical, but kind-hearted and keen as a razor. I tell you, nothing gets by old Parry! He could make a lot of money if he wanted to work, but he doesn't want to. He's been everywhere, seen everything, read every book ever written, knows everybody, but is poor as a church-mouse. Nobody knows exactly who he is, and I guess he isn't anybody exactly. They say he writes for the magazines and newspapers under a *nom de plume*, and manages to get along in that way, but he only needs enough to pay for his wash because he spends most of his time visiting or playing golf on the Riviera. He told me once his entire winter had cost him less than a thousand francs. But I'd trust him with my last sou and follow his advice even if it led me over a cliff."

"I wonder if it ever *would* lead you over a cliff!" mused Tom.

"Why do you say that?"

"Oh, I don't know! Just a thought of mine."

"You're right!" replied Allyn. "I chose a bad illustration. Parradym's advice wouldn't ever lead you over a cliff. On the contrary, it can always be followed with perfect safety. It is the gospel of expediency raised to its *n*th power—so much so that at times it almost seems to be 'idealistic' rather than 'utilitarian.' You remember 'Phil, 4'? 'The idio-psychological theory of ethics,' and all that rot? To be perfectly frank, I should say that the only danger from poor Parry would be that, if you followed his advice, you might remain quite comfortable when you ought to go on over the cliff—you remember

> "'Twere man's perdition to be safe
> 'When for the Truth he ought to die'!"

This sudden flash startled Tom.

"Why, Allyn!" he cried, "do you believe that? I thought you were a rank materialist!"

Allyn smiled rather wearily.

"I haven't the remotest idea *what* I am," he answered as he emptied his glass and replaced it on the sideboard. "And even if I had, I'd probably be mistaken."

"I don't understand," said Tom. "How can you be mistaken, if you *knew* what you were?"

"Why, I mean that I might *think* I was one thing and all the time be something else. My reason might lead me to accept a certain set of conclusions as sound, and my instinct would lead me to follow another. I might be an egoist in theory and an idealist by nature. Sometimes I suspect that's the way it is with Parry. He'll preach a doctrine of utter selfishness and give away his last quarter to a drunken tramp—'to hurry him along to the bone-yard,' as he says."

"Whatever he is, I guess he's a wise old guy!" answered Tom. "I never knew you thought about such things, Allyn!"

"Think about 'em!" groaned Allyn, suddenly turning upon Tom, the black circles around his eyes showing in strong contrast against the pallor of his skin. "With me it's just the other way round. I've got a chronic, burning thirst. I drink. I have to or I'd go crazy. But do you suppose I believe in it? No, I don't! In theory I'm a teetotaler. I'm for the grape-juice and soft stuff. But that's all the good it does me! I'd go shouting for prohibition at the head of the procession, and just naturally turn into the first saloon. That is, my feet would, but my head wouldn't. However, I'd get the drink. That's the instinct—the craving of the body, that drives me along, just as some other fellow's instinct would drive him along—over the cliff maybe—when he *knew* or thought he knew —that he was an ass for going."

"Mrs. Scott sent me up to say that the carriage

was waiting," said the valet appearing at the door, and both boys ran hastily down the corridor.

In the hall were Mrs. Wingate and Parradym, the host and hostess having already gone along, while at the door stood two broughams, their lamps lighted.

"Jump in with Lulie, Tom!" directed Allyn. "I'll probably drop over to the Welfleets' along about eleven. See you then, old man."

Mrs. Wingate was already lifting her skirt to get into the first carriage and displaying in the process a ravishingly slender ankle. She turned and glanced over her shoulder at Tom.

"Will you follow me?" she asked archly.

"Anywhere!" answered Tom for her ear alone, yet he felt that he would have proclaimed it joyously from the housetops with all the world listening. He sprang up the steps and seated himself beside her, his body tingling as he felt his arm touching the delicate texture of her white wrap, from which her face gleamed like that of a gypsy; and he turned intending to cast a glance of scorn at Parradym through the open window. The ruddy countenance of that gentleman was already there, however.

"Deal gently with the boy, Lulie!" said Parradym good-humoredly. "I have told him you were a Serpent of Old Nile!"

The brougham started forward, leaving the window vacant and crushing Tom deliciously in his companion.

"I—I think they are all perfectly horrid to you!" he blurted out excitedly. "But I want you to know that I'm on your side!"

He dared not look at her as he made this declaration. But he gloried in the fact that he was following his instinct. Had not Allyn said that instinct inevitably presided over mere intelligence? That was the case now with him. She was in his eyes a captive princess—misunderstood—slighted, abused, and he was already her champion.

"I knew you understood, the first time we met—at tea," she answered with gratitude. "It is so hard, if one cares for the things that are really worth while, to find any sympathy here. So I am quite lonely. My mother could not possibly understand how I could wish to read a book, for example. You recall how they all attributed some ulterior purpose to my being in the garden."

"I'm glad I saw you first that way!" said Tom tenderly. "I shall never forget how you looked sitting there with the sunlight in your hair! How strange I never knew Allyn had a sister!"

"He might as well not have any!" she retorted bitterly. "You see how I'm made to feel like an interloper, or at least like an unwelcome guest, as if somehow *I* were entirely to blame for my unfortunate marriage. But we mustn't talk of these unpleasant things!" she added gently. "We must be gay and happy in order to make a proper entrance into this grand mansion of chattering fools. You will tire of all this in a week. How

I envy you your splendid youth, your future—your work!"

Tom was not aware that he had mentioned any of his plans for the future, but her tone was enough to lead him to renew fervently his vows of loyalty; yet mingled with his real admiration for her and the flame of passion which she aroused was the conscious satisfaction that he, Tom Kelly, was actually making love to a beautiful three million dollar heiress and getting along rather better than could have been expected. It quite went to his head. If he could do this with her—think of all the other and less distinguished girls! But he must be true! A little fun—merely the mildest flirting—with others. He could hardly control his voice as the carriage paused to allow another, immediately preceding it, to roll away around the brilliantly lighted circle in front of an enormous house, the verandas of which, as well as the grounds, were hung with Chinese lanterns.

"The house of Mammon!" whispered Mrs. Wingate bitterly.

A groom snapped open the door and saluted.

"Carriages are being ordered for one o'clock," he said.

"Heavens!" muttered Tom. "It doesn't take five hours to eat dinner, does it?"

Lulie Wingate threw him a protecting smile.

"There will be dancing, afterward; you can stay if you wish. But I am tired of it. Be here at eleven, Jules."

They passed in through a row of footmen, or

of whom directed them to opposite sides of the great entrance hall, and when Tom emerged from the reception-room he found her already waiting for him. He hesitated as to whether he should offer her his arm as they followed the butler to the door of the drawing-room, but decided against it since Mrs. Wingate seemed inclined to lead the way by herself. A veritable tumult was going on inside the threshold so deafening that the voice of the butler, shouting "Mrs. Wingate," made no impression upon it whatever. He bent over inquiringly toward Tom, who gave him his name.

"—Mr. Perry!" bellowed the man defiantly at the throng.

Then hurrying forward came a stout, red-faced lady in a white gown who seized Mrs. Wingate's hand and cried hoarsely: "So glad to see you, Lulie! So nice of you to come, dear!—and this is Mr. Kelly! Come over and let me introduce you to some of these pretty girls!"

Tom had received an envelope in the coat-room containing a tiny sheet of crested note-paper which informed him in French that he was requested to escort one Miss Selby to dinner. He had also acquired a cocktail in the dressing-room, and in consequence felt quite at home—even rather superior; and this confidence was not impaired, as he followed his hostess through the crowd and received a confused impression of the appearance of most of the men. There really wasn't anybody that looked like much—a lot of little "Willies" with pointed waxed mustaches and pink cheeks, and old codgers

with "bow-windows," heavy jowls, and fishy eyes. He recognized and nodded somewhat patronizingly to Pennington, and later, at table, to Catherwood. He had not expected to see them, and he observed with pride the obvious interest taken in himself by their fair companions.

He began to realize that he was something of a celebrity—a little lion, for the time being, and he had the perspicacity to see that he must make hay while the sun shone and seize the opportunities of the moment.

"Miss Selby—Mr. Kelly:—Be nice to him, Pauline!" and his hostess waddled away leaving him standing in front of a pretty, if somewhat Junoesque, young blonde. Tom took the hand extended to his, and received a firm grip. The girl had warmth, directness, and a certain kind of dash that was distinctly attractive. It was rather plain that she was a little spoiled, probably wilful, and knew exactly what she wanted. It was equally obvious that she was glad to have Tom as her partner at dinner, and she took pains to let her satisfaction be seen by her less fortunate companions in the slight touch of proprietorship which she injected into her manner and remarks.

"I'm like 'Red-Top seeing the world,'" said Tom, smiling. "Didn't you have 'Baby-Days' when you were a child? And don't you remember the picture of the chick who started out on his career and got lost?"

"'Red-Top'? Was that the chick's name?"

inquired Pauline, innocently lifting her eyes in the direction of Tom's wavy locks.

He laughed.

"I didn't mean to suggest that the analogy was so close, but I see it strikes you."

"Do you feel like 'Red-Top'?" she asked good-naturedly.

"This is my first appearance in smart society," he answered, "and I'm naturally a bit out of my depth. If you see me drowning please pull me ashore and give me 'first aid'?"

They were already on an easy footing and Tom congratulated himself that he was getting along very well. Pauline introduced him to two or three manifestly cordial young women standing near them, and when the move was made to the dining-room he felt entirely at ease. He had no difficulty in guiding his Miss Selby to her place, for the butler stood at the door and directed them where to go, and his chair had no sooner been pushed in by the footman in powdered hair behind him than the dinner began to be served.

Although fast getting used to luxury, Tom was actually aghast at the reckless extravagance displayed in what appeared to be regarded by those around him as a simple entertainment. Twelve flunkeys waited upon the twenty-eight guests, most of whom were young men and girls of about his own age, with a sprinking of oldish bachelors. The table was profusedly decorated with orchids and roses, and loaded with the hothouse's finest

fruit. Russian caviare served in ice-blocks, green-turtle soup, Pompano, mousse of an indefinable and delicious savor, magnificent saddles of lamb, elaborate salads concealed in the interior of gigantic specimens of fruit, golden plover, and complicated ices of the form and size of swans, constituted a menu which would have been appropriate to the coronation of an Emperor. Tom ate from gold plate and drank from rock-crystal, and he ate and drank freely, enjoying it all, not observing that comparatively few of the young guests seemed to take any interest in the Lucullian viands offered them. The noise in the dining-room was intensified by much shouting across the table and boisterous laughter on the part of most of the men. In fact, noise seemed to be the recognized thermometer of enjoyment. Only with difficulty could Tom hear what Miss Selby was saying or make himself heard in reply. One man in particular succeeded in creating an overwhelming din by his own unaided attempts to liven up the already lively party, and his raucous trumpetings could be heard rising high above the other uproar as he turned, in eccentric jumps from side to side, shrieking his witticisms so that none of them should be lost, his flaccid face flushed with champagne. Tom became somewhat dizzy from the glare of the electric lights and almost faint from the heaviness of the air. Once his eyes found those of Lulie Wingate beyond a huge bed of flaming orchids and she raised her brows and shrugged her shoulders slightly

as if in deprecation of the scene about them. But in spite of the blur that kept coming across his vision he experienced a strange exhilaration. He felt almost as if he were taking part in some barbaric ceremonial. The hubbub was like the frenzied shouting of fanatics before some heathen altar, and the odor of the food like the incense offered to some great and terrible god.

When at last the feast was over, it was with a sense of physical relief that he followed his host out upon the veranda and let the soft, damp air from the ocean play about his temples. A footman offered him cigars and cigarettes, but he declined them. He must keep his wind in shape for the tournament. The tournament! He had almost forgotten it in the excitement incident to his advent in this giddy social whirl. To-morrow he would go into strict training. Yet he knew in his heart that the attention he was receiving, the lavishness he saw about him, the recognition that was his for the first time, the discovery that, in spite of his poverty he counted—was somebody—in the great world, the larger vision of the material life, was more to him than the mere winning of any tournament. The championship was all very well, but you couldn't make a living by playing tennis. Now that he was one of these swells—these rich and powerful personages who ran things—to whom money was nothing—was there anything he couldn't have? Why shouldn't he make friends with these men—his host Welfleet, for instance,

get solid with him, and feather his nest? Old Parradym seemed to have a pretty snug time of it! It shouldn't be difficult for him, Tom, to do the same thing.

Pondering thus, he was joined presently by Catherwood and Pennington, who insisted on dragging him off to a near-by group of men of about his own age and introducing him as the coming victor in the national tournament. These young fellows evidently regarded themselves as the *jeunesse dorée* of New York and Newport society, as doubtless they were, for their conversation dwelt exclusively upon the more private social happenings of those places, save when it hovered with significant innuendoes over back stairs and stage entrances. Tom was accustomed to the ubiquitous use of Christian names at college, but he was amazed to discover that not only did these gallant youths assume an attitude of the greatest familiarity with himself and with each other, but that they seemed to be on an intimate footing with all the adults, male and female, in the select circle of the Four Hundred. Elderly persons, who apparently had a considerable amount of personal dignity, were referred to easily as "Bobby" This and "Daisy" That, much as the man in the street refers to his favorite race-horse, actress, or prize-fighter. An atmosphere of omniscience in regard to social and sporting life hung over the circle. Most of the boys were not twenty-five years old, yet their talk was mostly of gambling houses and demi-mondaines. They seemed to

view Tom much as wealthy patrician youths of ancient Rome might have regarded a well-recommended gladiator—since he appeared strong in wind and limb they accorded him their approval and received him in a friendly fashion for the time being into their midst.

The freedom also with which they discussed the intimate domestic affairs of their friends and their friends' fathers and mothers shocked him. He had thought himself quite a man of the world before; had himself indulged in a good deal of cheap and pretentious talk about people in Boston and Brookline whom he hardly knew; but this was—well—*raw!* It was one thing to refer to an elderly married man by his first name—"Freddy," for instance—but openly to discuss his allowance to a notorious vaudeville *artiste* and his quarrels with her predecessor seemed to savor of indelicacy. The anecdotes exchanged were perhaps no more vulgar than those he had heard at his table in Memorial Hall, but there was a cynicism in the way they were told that made them seem doubly salacious. In a word, the tone was low. The conversation seemed to have become hopelessly "mired." Even the discussion of athletics was so colored by betting talk—of big sums wagered and lost on the most trifling events—that the sport itself seemed a secondary consideration. And there were, besides, half-jocular references to the matrimonial prospects of the young ladies whose society they had but recently enjoyed at dinner. Tom

heard the probable fortunes of several of these girls openly estimated, as well as those of their parents. And there was also a good deal of malicious gossip—commonly referred to as slander, but better described as character murder. In this gentle art these young gentlemen had already acquired a fine Italian hand. They spared no one. When other subjects waned, they returned to it with renewed zest. The stab was veiled, but if the thrust was usually behind the arras, poor old Polonius was ultimately dragged forth a victim.

But if Tom was startled, he listened, none the less, with passionate eagerness to all that he heard. It tickled his vanity to feel himself on such a familiar footing with the great, or those who walked with them. This was a "young" party, but at any rate his companions—all these youths and maidens—were the pages and flower-girls, the courtiers or *avant-couriers* of royalty. He gathered that there was a richer world beyond—even than this! What marvels lay behind those other doors as yet closed? If these were the children, what of the parents? He flattered himself that it would take but little practice on his part to talk as glibly as these other fellows. Apparently, no mental acquirement was necessary. Politics, art, philosophy, books, were not touched upon. To be shaven, bathed, well-tailored, to have your hair parted in the middle, to wear a white waistcoat, and a dr shirt with pearl studs—imitation, perhaps—to lo pleasant and have a ready smile, these were

the essentials for admission into the palaces of the great. So far as Tom could see there was nothing about these men, save their strict adherence to convention in the matter of manners and dress, to differentiate them from any other youths of their own age, except the fact that they were the guests of Mrs. Welfleet in Newport, Rhode Island, instead of being the guests of Mrs. Smith of somewhere else.

At the end of half an hour or so the orchestra began tuning up in a pavilion which had been erected for the occasion on the Welfleets' extensive lawn, and the party on the veranda broke up, some of the men returning to the drawing-room, but the majority floating toward the library, where tables had been prepared for bridge and poker.

Tom, diffident about entering a hall full of comparative strangers and somewhat doubtful as to his knowledge of the art of dancing as practised in Newport, wandered away among the Japanese lanterns until the ball should begin, and he could have an opportunity to observe in what respect the manners of the Four Hundred differed from those of the Back Bay.

A few adventurous couples had already found their way to the pavilion and were taking advantage of the unimpeded floor. The glare of lights, the rattle of harness, and the noise of carriages, with the shouts of the coachmen, came through the shrubbery from the near-by drive. The guests at other dinner-parties were "coming on" to Mrs. Welfleet's. The babel of voices in the house had

increased to nearly double its previous volume. The halls were full of the newly arrived, whose boisterous greetings, rising sharply above the strains of the orchestra, penetrated the night.

Soon the ample rooms could no longer contain the plethora of guests who surged out upon the piazza and near-by lawn. There began to be a concerted motion toward the pavilion. Tom, feeling that he must not lose this opportunity of extending his acquaintance, sauntered gradually in the same direction, looking for Miss Selby. He had already accepted her invitation to take lunch on her father's yacht next day, and he regarded her as a sort of social sponsor, a part which she was obviously quite ready to play.

He had half a dozen dances with Pauline, who graciously permitted several of her friends to share his acquaintance while maintaining a general supervision over his career, and he was introduced to some thirty or forty young ladies of various degrees of physical attractiveness. But in all this riot of wealth and beauty he saw no one who in his eyes compared for an instant with Lulie Wingate in charm, looks, or breeding. Besides these sunburned blondes she was like an alluring Semiramis—or some mysterious Queen of the Night—from whom floated an elusive and intoxicating charm.

She was not among the dancers in the pavilion, and as he looked for her he suddenly recalled the fact that she had ordered her carriage for eleven o'clock. He felt a sudden contrition, coupled wi

fear, lest he should have offended her. He ran back to the house and sought her through all the rooms, but she was not there—she had gone home probably. But in answer to his question the butler told him positively that Mrs. Wingate had not gone home, that her groom was still waiting at the front door. The drawing-room was practically empty and she was not among those gathered around the card-tables in the library. Puzzled, he returned to the pavilion. Perhaps she was sitting, waiting for him somewhere—expecting him to look for her.

Tom innocently began to extend his search amid the shrubbery, but although he flushed several couples sitting in the darkness, Lulie was not to be found. He was by this time at the farther end of the lawn beyond the circle of the Japanese lanterns. A warm humid breath ascended from the friendly earth, making him think of Cambridge—of the heavy, moisture-laden night air of Brattle Street. How different all this was from the dull provincial college town! Again his breast swelled with the delicious—almost delirious—consciousness that he, Tom Kelly, who had once regarded himself as a sort of "mucker," or at least as a social undesirable, had come, seen, and already partly conquered, this important outpost of the great world, was already an honored guest in the summer social centre of America, had found more than favor in the tender eyes of two beautiful women. It did not seem possible that all this could have happened to him. The strains of "The Blue

Danube" floated across the velvet grass. The night lacked but one joy—he had not danced with Lulie! Where could she be? If he could only find her, he might possibly persuade her to surrender her prejudices against the empty pleasures of society to the extent of letting him take her in his arms—in the pavilion, of course.

In this mood of self-satisfied exaltation he slowly turned and made his way through the shrubbery with the idea of returning to the house. He was now in a remote corner of the grounds where it was quite dark and where the orchestra could be heard but faintly, and he had progressed not more than a dozen steps when unexpectedly just in front of him the blackness was shattered by the flare of a match. Framed in the outline of a rustic summer-house appeared the figures of a man and a woman, their faces thrown into staccato relief. For the space of half a dozen seconds—while the man was lighting a cigar—Tom stood and watched them, hardly trusting his vision. There was no doubt about it! The woman was Lulie Wingate!

Chagrin, disappointment, anger, possessed him alternately. What right had she—a married woman—to be off there in the dark, flirting with any man? And then, as he stole silently off toward the house, the bitter realization came to him that if Mrs. Wingate chose to sit in the dark in a summer-house it was no business of his. Any rights in the situation that he might have under the circumstances must necessarily arise out of some unformulated

and unrecognized relationship which had come into existence between them. Was there any such? He had known her barely eight hours. She was an older—if not much older—woman, with a husband. What could he, Tom Kelly, have in common with her? And yet his fierce blaze of wrath at the sight of her with another man told him that in some vague way he had linked himself with her in his thoughts, had promised himself some sort of romantic adventure, innocent or even otherwise, and he was furious that it was not to be, furious at the discovery that she had played with him, tricked and fooled him like the half-baked college boy that he was.

Still in a blind rage, he stumbled into Allyn on the steps of the veranda. His friend's face was flushed and his eyes had an unnatural and restless glimmer. In addition he had obviously an irresistible desire to talk, for his words tumbled in a steady, uninterrupted burble from his lips. This was a damn stupid party, he informed Tom, just like all these parties. There was nothing in it. A lot of young asses, foolish girls, and silly old women. He knew where he could have a real time—"understan'—a real *time!*" But, first—he lowered his tone confidentially—they would go to a nice little place—sort of club, you know—where there would be only a few good fellows like themselves, and where they could have a quiet drink and play the wheel.

Although Tom realized that Allyn was in no

condition to go to a gambling-house, he was quite ready to cast all such considerations aside—must see everything—he told himself—study the whole game from start to finish—and Allyn was no worse off drunk than sober. To hell with everything, anyway! They'd make a night of it. In this frame of mind he sought out Allyn's groom, ordered up the brougham and climbed into it. Lulie could take care of herself, his friend assured him. Let her go home alone. She'd find an escort fast enough, and if she didn't it wouldn't hurt her.

Thus ended, or rather began, Tom's first night in Newport.

XVI

TOM awoke to an unwonted sense of comfort. Even the persistent aching of his head did not mar his delicious sensations as he lay there between the fine hand-embroidered sheets of his bed in the "royal suite." He had never occupied such a couch before. At home in Newbury Street all the beds had wooden slats with thin, sandwich-like mattresses crushed solid by generations of use, and at college he had slept upon a similar mattress with only the substitution of a sagging spring instead of the wooden slats. He had usually been so tired that it had not mattered, but half-submerged in the soft and dainty voluptuousness of his present accommodations he now realized that the beds which he had previously enjoyed had, without exception, been hard and slinky. This was like lying on a cloud. One did not want to move, still less to get up. Drowsily he wondered how one managed to get breakfast. At home one arose, walked gingerly across the faded grass matting, and poured out the water necessary for washing from a heavy white pitcher into a thick white bowl on a wooden wash-stand, whose once varnished surface exhibited a hundred intersecting and concentric circles caused by damp tooth-mugs and similar

receptacles. In spite of the feast of which he had partaken the night before, Tom discovered that he was hungry, the reason for which was presently indicated by the chiming of a small French time-piece upon the mantel. Eleven o'clock!

Tom had rarely slept so late in his life before. But it did not seem particularly late now. There was nothing to get up for, except to lunch on the Selbys' yacht at one o'clock, and that was two hours away. He could lie in bed another hour if he chose. His eye travelled across the heavy monograms on the linen to a satin quilt hanging over the foot of the bed, thence to a wadded Japanese dressing-gown and slippers placed near by, and finally to the naked Grecian beauty emerging from her bath in the Ionian Sea. By a natural connotation he saw himself likewise enjoying a refreshing bath in the porcelain tub in the adjacent room. How cool and delightful it would be! And he would try some of those other strange hygienic artifices, such as the needle bath.

He threw back the sheets and swung his silk-pajamaed legs over the side of the bed until his fe lost themselves in the soft fur of a rug. Then, i he was about to stand up, his eye caught a th block of onyx lying upon the night-table w were imbedded three mother-of-pearl butt marked, in small gold letters, "Butler," "Servan Hall," "Valet." The words "Servants' F suggested breakfast. He had read about pla where one breakfasted in bed, but he had n

enjoyed that luxury himself. Surely here, if anywhere, he could assume that such a custom existed. Perhaps the same man who brought the breakfast could explain how to work the different faucets in the bathroom. He pressed the button marked "Valet," and sank back again among the down pillows.

The window-shutters had been closed and only slight streaks of sunlight were visible upon the walls. The air of the room was heavy with odors from the garden and the faint smell of silk upholstery. A moment or two only seemed to elapse before there was a subdued knock; the door opened, and the valet who had assisted him in dressing the night before entered. Without greeting Tom, he first placed a freshly pressed suit of clothes upon a chair and then, stepping noiselessly to the windows, threw open the blinds. Instantly the room was flooded with sunlight, so that Tom was almost blinded. He closed his eyes and turned over comfortably. The man evidently knew what to do, and would undoubtedly keep on going until he was stopped. Tom could hear him doing something in the bathroom, and presently there came a rush and swirl of water. Then the man suddenly appeared beside the bed and said deferentially:

"Will you have breakfast before, or after, your bath, sir?"

"Oh, I think I'll eat first," answered Tom, for he was not sure whether it would be good form to get back into bed after he had once left it.

"Shall I wash your face, sir?" inquired the man in a matter-of-fact tone.

Tom was genuinely shocked. Was it humanly possible that fellows existed who would allow a servant to swab their faces as they lay in bed?

"No, thanks!" he retorted almost contemptuously.

"Very good, sir," continued the valet. "Will you have a little something to drink, sir, before you have your breakfast? How about a split of champagne? Mr. Allyn is very apt to take one, sir; I can bring it in a jiffy."

The idea of drinking champagne on an empty stomach before he had got out of bed also staggered Tom's mental equipment. Rather than permit the valet to suspect, however, that it was not his habitual custom, he would unhesitatingly have risked the results, had it not so happened that champagne at that particular moment was the last thing in the world that he desired.

"No," he said, "I don't think I want anything to drink. What have you got for breakfast?"

"We have tea, coffee, and chocolate," replied the valet glibly. "Melons, oranges, blackb
and raspberries, peaches and plums, cereals,
bacon, chicken hash, lamb chops, sausages,
rolls, corn bread, toast, white and graham a
health bread. Would you kindly mention w
you would prefer?"

Tom tried to remember as much of the r
as he could. It dimly suggested an apotheos

"Beefsteak, codfish and cream—rare or well done"—the prehistoric menu at the "Mountain Home House"!

"Oh," he yawned, "bring me a piece of melon, corn bread and coffee, and some scrambled eggs with sausages and bacon. That will hold me for a while, I guess. You haven't got any griddle-cakes have you?"

"I can ask the chef to make some for you," said the valet. "But we haven't them ready, sir."

"Never mind. Don't bother," remarked Tom affably, not inclined to be captious, yet at the same time desirous that the valet should know that if he did not see what he wanted he was quite ready to ask for it, that all these little things were part of his ordinary daily life, and that he was quite to the manor born.

The valet disappeared and Tom continued to doze luxuriously. Taken altogether, his recollections of the night before, though somewhat confused, were by no means unpleasant. His experiences with Allyn had been negative, and in spite of his chagrin at discovering Mrs. Wingate in the darkness of the Welfleets' lawn with another man, the significance of this incident now seemed less marked than it had at the time. Frankly, he told himself, there was no reason why she should not have been there. It was hardly natural to suppose that he was her only admirer. Yet she certainly had given him encouragement! More encouragement than he had ever received from Evelyn! Lulie

might be said almost to have openly made love to him. As he lay with half-closed lids he could hear again the soft murmurs of her voice with their almost plaintive cadences, see the wistful, alluring glances from those entreating eyes. Was she a little devil, after all? Parradym had said so. Allyn had practically admitted as much. Well, what if she was? He chuckled with lazy satisfaction. He had certainly made a success of it at the Welfleets' dinner-dance! Quite the lion! All the girls had seemed to want to meet him; all the men had been cordially deferential. He was going to make good at Newport, socially at any rate, and if he did make good! There was no end to it, apparently. And part of the good time was knowing girls like Lulie Wingate. How ravishing she had looked yesterday afternoon sitting in the shade of the hedge by the sun-dial. He wondered if she made a practice of coming to the spot at the same hour each day. If so, they would have a trysting-place. His mind rapidly took long leaps. The fact that she was a married woman would make a liaison perfectly safe. He wondered when he should next see her. How far his thoughts might have taken him is problematical, but at that moment the valet returned carrying a tray covered with a fine damask cloth and loaded with china and shining silver. From the closet he produced two scarlet cushions which he tucked behind Tom's back, and a small white wooden rack with folding legs, which he superimposed across the lower half of Tom's body. T

he placed the tray upon the rack and stood at attention.

"If you miss anything, I will be just outside, sir," and he departed, leaving the door slightly ajar.

Tom surveyed the contents of the tray with gratification. The china was of the most transparent sort, decorated with a delicate tracery of birds and flowers. In front reposed the half of a luscious hothouse melon, and beside it a small tumbler of orange juice. Flanking the melon was a plate of cereal and beneath a silver cover he found the most deliciously prepared scrambled eggs, in which were embedded tiny sausages not much larger than cigarettes. There was also a saucer containing rolls of sweet butter interspersed with slivers of cracked ice, a plate of smoking corn muffins, and a silver dish of crisp bacon. The finishing touch was supplied by a box of Turkish cigarettes and a silver alcohol-lamp already lighted.

Tom poured himself out a full cup of aromatic coffee, tempered it with hot milk through a silver strainer, and added a touch of oozy cream. Having devoured everything edible upon the tray in the space of about six minutes, he leaned back with his head against the scarlet cushions and lit a cigarette. "The height of luxury!" Now he knew what it was! It was to recline among down cushions in your pajamas at eleven o'clock in the morning, smoking a Turkish cigarette "made" (so the box stated) "from selected leaves grown in sunny corners

of the walls of Smyrna," with the breath of a rose-garden floating in through the window, with your stomach lined with sausages composed "of little pigs and choice spices," scrambled eggs studded with truffles, mushrooms, and chicken livers, and hothouse melons at three dollars apiece!

"I wonder what Bridget would say if she could see me now," remarked Tom to himself.

Then he added to the door in a loud and somewhat bullying tone: "Hello there! Is my bath ready?"

Tom, togaed like some old Roman, emerged grandly from his bath, and reclining in a cosey chair and smoking another cigarette, meanwhile graciously permitted himself to be shaved by the valet, whom he discovered to be not only an adept in arts of haberdashery, but a manicure, masseur, and barber as well. In fact, he inspired such confidence that Tom would not have hesitated to consult him upon any difficult point in Newport etiquette or ethics which might have presented itself. Still assisted by this elegant professor of the physical humanities, he arrayed himself in his flannels, selected a tie sporting the colors of the "Woolsack," and condescended to glance at the morning papers. In spite of his delicious breakfast and the fact that he had already smoked three exceptionally strong cigarettes, he felt a curious sensation of enervation—a craving for something, he did not know exactly what—and he poured himself out a Scotch and soda.

Quaffing this, he strolled windowward, to discover Parradym smoking his pipe in the rose-garden below upon the same seat that Lulie had occupied the afternoon before.

"Good morning," said Parradym without looking up. "Come down and take a sun-bath with me."

There was something almost uncanny in the way this fat bachelor could apparently see out of the side of his head.

"There's a staircase just outside your door—to the left," he added.

"All right," answered Tom, for although he was now convinced that he did not like Mr. Parradym he nevertheless found it difficult, if not impossible, to withstand the man's peculiar—if possibly "malicious animal"—magnetism. He selected a couple of mild cigars, filled his cigarette-case, and descended to the rose-garden. He'd get some points on the social game, anyhow—on the Selbys, possibly. A rosy young patrician, he sauntered across the grassy circle to Parradym, who moved over to make room for him.

"Great day!" remarked Tom with a touch of patronage. *He*, at any rate, was no sycophant. "What's the book?"

Parradym held it up with a smile. It was a limp-covered copy of "Epictetus."

"Oh, Lord!" growled Tom, "you might as well read the Bible and be done with it!"

"A chapter or two of Ecclesiastes wouldn't be

a bad introduction to Newport," nodded the older man. "I don't suppose you're ready for it yet, though. In a year or so you'll be chasing around looking for your lost appetite. By the way, how was it this morning?"

"Fine!" snapped our hero.

Parradym looked at his watch.

"I wonder how it will be for lunch," he chuckled. "Let a case-hardened old materialist give you a tip. Don't blunt the edge of your appetite at the start! There's nothing on earth to beat a canvas-back cooked and served in its own gravy. You can have 'em here—all you want—just like everything else. But if you eat too many of 'em, why, they taste no better than boiled fowl. Curious—and disappointing, too!"

"I haven't tasted any yet!"

"No, they're out of season, of course! Not that that makes any difference here! But it's the same way with anything—hothouse melons, for example. Eat 'em three times a day for a week and you can't bear to look one in the face. And yet, unfortunately, it's so easy to get used to having them that one isn't happy without them. Therein lies one of the great problems. Question: Is it better to eat melons and miss them if you don't get them, or never to eat them and not to miss them? When you (answer that tell me, will you?"

"I'll take a few melons, please." Tom stretc luxuriously.

"That's what I thought," said Parradym. "W

it's easy to get them here. They fall right off the vines into your lap. Melons, plums, and peaches! Only don't tell too many people, old chap. Don't spoil the market! Let's keep it to ourselves!"

Tom flushed uncomfortably. He didn't care to be classed by Parradym with himself. But he recognized the truth of the latter's earlier remarks about satiety. In fact, the dinner at the Welfleets' had been an astonishing example of it.

"Guess you're right," he answered. "I suppose that dinner I went to last night cost at least a thousand dollars, but I didn't see any one there who seemed to enjoy eating it. I should say you might just as well have given them scrambled eggs."

"Better!" said Parradym. "Everybody here is suffering from ennui—old and young alike! Even the children are bored to death. Your true social Newporter has no appetite for anything. They have exhausted everything the world has to offer in the way of legitimate amusement and luxury. Did you ever happen to think that that was the real danger of this sort of life? There's nothing legitimate—straight—decent—that anybody has any taste left for, so they go after the other thing."

"Do you really mean that?" demanded Tom.

"It's as true as most generalities," replied Parradym. "Anyhow, that's the tendency. But"—and he slapped Tom on the knee—"that's where you and I come in, my boy! These millionaires must have entertainment—somebody to talk to,

and their daughters have got to marry. And the supply of presentable males doesn't equal the demand. Just look around you during the next few weeks! Anything in trousers that isn't deaf, dumb, and blind, or that hasn't actually served a term in State's prison, can live here for nothing on golden plover and champagne, and when the season is over can spend the winter cruising round the Mediterranean on somebody's yacht, and afterward marry the daughter, and the yacht, too. Really, it makes me blush!"

"I should think it would!" said Tom disgustedly. Parradym's bald cynicism almost made him ill.

"But the 'free ride' is a dangerous game in some ways," continued his new friend without noticing Tom's tone. "And the first thing to look out for is the possibility that in a very short time you may not get any more fun out of it yourself—that you'll be tired of the same scenery. Don't eat too many melons! Go easy on the plover! Don't get bored, because it's your stock in trade to be interesting and interested. And then, my dear young man, you may be able to hang on like myself to a ripe old age, still moderately enjoying the dinners, the dances, the clambakes, the yachting, and the house-parties that will be furnished to you 'free gratis for nothing,' simply because the lonely rich have got to have companionship. And then, too, when you are quite ready, you can take your pick of a hundred really beautiful and highly ed cated young girls and go to live on the Rivie

papa's money. Well, what do you think of the prospect?"

Tom turned on him in righteous scorn.

"I think you're a cold-blooded old snob!" he snorted.

Parradym laughed softly.

"Good!" he muttered under his breath. "Keep that up! It's what I am, all right."

And then Tom felt a sense of contrition. Parradym was an older man and a gentleman of a sort, and he had no right to insult him.

"I beg your pardon!" he said stiffly. "I should not have spoken as I did. I apologize."

"Bless your dear soul! What for?" asked Parradym.

XVII

A STEAM-LAUNCH, manned by two sailors and a petty officer in uniform, carried Tom magnificently to where lay the *Pauline*. His head was still weary from the strain, intestinal and nervous, of the preceding evening, so that the glare of the sunlight on the white sails of the yachts hurt his eyes, and he shaded them with his hand and looked through his fingers. The Selbys' was one of the biggest of all of them, apparently. She lay apart from the others, her nose pointing seaward, smoke curling from her yellow funnels, and her propellers lazily churning the water at her stern into a swirling caldron. Tom could see a couple of officers standing on deck in anticipation of his arrival. It made him feel rather queer, almost afraid. It was the same sensation which he had experienced on his arrival at "Beausejour," only it was intensified. The yacht was clearly waiting for *him*. Without him it would not put to sea. He was, in truth, the controlling factor in the movements of it and its owner for that day. Instinct told him t somehow this moment was big with fate. Wl made him a factor? And if the yacht hung up his arrival to-day, might it not to-morrow,

next year, and forever? It would be grand to have a yacht. Yet, why not?

"All ready, sir," said the bos'n, touching his cap, as the launch swept up to the gangway.

Tom arose and, clutching the tassellated white cord which ran between the highly polished brass stanchions, climbed up the ladder.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Kelly! Come right aboard!"

A stout gentleman in blue coat and white flannel trousers, his yachting cap ornamented with a large gold monogram, was greeting Tom with an expansive smile and outstretched hand. The captain, beside him, saluted respectfully.

"Hope you can put up with a family-party," apologized the owner of the yacht, who seemed anxious to give entire satisfaction. "But there's so much fuss and feathers on shore, we like to get off by ourselves occasionally an' have a nice, quiet time."

Mr. Selby repeated this with a stereotyped blandness which suggested the use of the formula on previous occasions. Without waiting for any reply he turned to the officer at his left:

"All right, captain. Just a little run so's to get us back about five o'clock. Be sure an' don't go anywhere it's rough."

Then he laid his hand familiarly on Tom's shoulder and led him toward the stern.

"Mrs. Selby and my daughter are back there waitin' for you," he said. "We'll have lunch as soon's the yacht gets started."

Tom was conducted by his host to where the cabin superstructure gave place to a roomy sweep of deck—half piazza, half drawing-room—for there were red-cushioned wicker easy-chairs, a large table covered with books, magazines, and games, and an upright piano fastened beside the companionway. It was clear, even to Tom, that the owners of the yacht were not accustomed to go "where it was rough." A large, rotund lady was knitting in one of the chairs, and Pauline arose from another, looking charming in a white linen sailor-waist wide open at the neck. She shook hands with the same cordial definiteness which he had noticed the evening before, and presented Tom to her mother.

"This is Mr. Kelly, mamma," she announced, quite as if she had said, "This is my new watch, mamma," and was giving "mamma" a chance to express her opinion of the new acquisition in spite of the fact that that opinion was wholly immaterial to the owner.

Mrs. Selby wore habitually a distrait expression suggesting doubt and anxiety—doubt as to exactly what was done by the best people under similar circumstances and anxiety lest her execution shou fail to conform to the proper standards. This r sulted in her temporizing with herself, which c veyed a curious impression of indifference—wi inferiors of coldness. But essentially neither Mrs. Selby a snob nor was her husband, for t made no pretenses, and simply offered to pay sp

cash for what social goods they purchased as they went along. As they paid handsomely, demanding no discounts, they were accepted for what they were and, on the whole, were more liked than not; and as Pauline was undeniably a catch—an only child, Selby's interest in his canning business being rated at several millions—she went everywhere and was the dictatrix of a circle of her own, of which the two most willing slaves were her own father and mother.

"Oh," said Mrs. Selby, hardly looking at Tom, "Pauline was telling us quite a lot about you. You're the tennis-player, ain't you?"

"A kind of one!" answered Tom genially, feeling that after all there was not much difference between these people and those he had known in his earlier boarding-house days.

"He's going to win the national championship!" declared Pauline. "That is, if he doesn't get gastric poisoning first," she added as a steward approached and announced that luncheon was served.

"Well," Selby assured him, "your insides won't get hurt from what you eat on *this* yacht. The truck is delivered on board fresh every morning and so is the milk. No ptomaines here. And all the dry stuff is put up in glass—at my own factory. Come on down!" He turned to the companion-way.

"Papa always lugs in the factory, if he can!" laughed Pauline defiantly. "I don't blame him. It's a model one, the kind they send excursions of

public-school children over. You see it advertised everywhere. 'Hot water and serve'—you know—that sort of thing. But it's just as good a business as boys' suits, or pickles, or ink, or plumbing fixtures. They're all represented here in the smartest circles. And as far as the *old* families go, most of them before 1860 were *slave*-traders, they tell me."

She had a naïve candor coupled with a sense of humor that was delightful to Tom, and he felt that she was a "good sport," with no pretenses, even if a trifle "bossy." But if the meal was hygienic it was none the less elaborate, and gave not the slightest indication of any of the ingredients being put up in glass or anything else. All the Selbys ate heartily of melons, clear soup, salmon, roast beef, salad, and dessert, and after everything else was served Mrs. Selby consumed three large peaches which she directed the steward to "cut up" for her.

"I always did like peaches," she explained, with her mouth full of them. "Now, strawberries—I like *them*, you know, but they don't like *me!* And Mr. Selby can mix them up with lobster or cream or anything and never mind them at all."

She wiped her lips minutely on a damask napkin and arose with some difficulty.

"Now don't stay down here smokin' all this beautiful afternoon!" she remarked. "Why don't you have your cigars on deck?"

"Oh, leave them alone, mamma," expostulated Pauline. "Only don't be long!" she ordered.

"Give us a chance to get to know each other,

said Mr. Selby, offering Tom a heavy cigar shaped like a miniature submarine. "We've got all the afternoon to talk to you. Have a lick—*ure?*"

Tom declined the liqueur. He was intensely interested in the Selby *ménage*. Here, apparently, was a family of which the parents were the plainest of plain people, without culture of any sort whatever, who were received as a matter of course in a society which he had always supposed to be the most select in America, and by contrast with which the smart set of the Back Bay seemed almost provincial. Unquestionably, his own mother was more of a real lady than Mrs. Selby. His mother had peculiarities, but Mrs. Selby was—what was it exactly?—lifeless. There didn't seem to be any spark in her magneto. She was always running on first speed—grinding heavily along as if it were hard work. Yet, his mother had never known anybody, outside of her church circle and her own dingy aunts and cousins, save the casual acquaintances of their peripatetic summer vacations; while Mrs. Selby had dukes to dinner. Her husband confided this. In spite of that fact Tom lit the submarine with a slight sense of doing his host a favor. Selby paid for his dukes. and he was paying for *him*, Tom Kelly.

"Yes," remarked Mr. Selby, "Pauline wanted a yacht, so I picked this up second-hand. Just exactly as good as new, too! But Newport ain't Newport without the water. Give's you something to do in the afternoon, y'understand? I

can't learn to play golf. I've tried half a dozen times, and the damn game gets on my nerves. Pauline can play it, though! She's a fine girl, Mr. Kelly."

With a certain sense of indelicacy Tom agreed with enthusiasm that Pauline was indeed a fine girl. Her father seemed pleased. Yes, he assured his guest, Pauline was a smart one. She could always wind her old dad around her little finger—get anything she wanted out of him, or her mother either! Well, they hadn't anything to do except to make her happy. And she certainly did seem to be having a good time of it—dancing-parties every night, picnics, and so on. She arranged all their dinners, paid the calls, attended to everything! "Executive"—that was what she was. He only hoped she wouldn't marry one of those puny little Johnnies you saw so many of. But it wasn't at all likely. Pauline wouldn't get fooled. You could bet your life on that. She'd want a real *man*, not a wooden figure to drape clothes on. A few of those foreign fellers worried him at times—they were good-looking and had a way with 'em. Some of the women went crazy over them. But *he* didn't propose to have any damned dago for a son-in-law. He wanted his girl to marry an American and stay right here at home where she belonged. Oh, she'd take care of herself, all right.

Tom was embarrassed by such frankness, a reflection of which was clearly perceptible in Pauline herself. He didn't want the old man's confidenc

He liked his daughter and his yacht and his cigars, but it stopped there. It was evident that he—Tom, the erstwhile worm—possessed something which money couldn't buy—a pearl without price—which could be exchanged at his own terms. Of course, no decent fellow would sink to the level of marrying for money—but if he *did!* As Selby burbled on, Tom could not efface a vision of himself sitting there in state alone with Pauline—her father and mother safely ashore—bound for foreign climes, a winter on the Riviera, up the Nile, among the Ionian Isles—a king and queen, able to do as they liked, by virtue of the inexhaustible flow of dividends from the Selby factory. It was like their advertisement: "Just add hot water and serve!" Pauline was one of Parry's ripe peaches, ready and waiting to drop off the bough into his mouth. He needn't even take the trouble to raise his hand—she'd drop of herself. "Several millions!" A million was forty or fifty thousand a year! "Several" might be anywhere from three to six or seven, over a hundred thousand dollars a year, anyhow! And all his, practically, to do what he liked with! His heart beat excitedly at the humiliating thought. He could smoke cigars like that all the time! And Pauline! He told himself that any man would be proud to have her for a wife. He felt sure that he could love Pauline, and he'd give up his life to making her happy. He followed Mr. Selby up the companionway in a sort of delirium. "A hundred thousand a year! A hundred thousand a year!"

kept echoing in his ears. A word from him, a discreet period of hesitation, his name would be in the papers, and he would be "holding three million dollars in his arms." He'd heard Catherwood get off that remark to Pennington, who had been dancing with her the night before. Pennington? Come to think of it, that sly little Sam had been very attentive, perhaps had his own plans in regard to the Selby fortune. But imagine a girl like Pauline marrying Pennington!

These thoughts were hovering in the background of Tom's mind as he followed Selby up the companionway and out upon the immaculate deck. The yacht was headed up the coast toward Martha's Vineyard and, while there was a refreshing breeze, the sea was calm and smiling. An occasional gull followed in their wake, at times almost motionless; then, giving a few lazy strokes, rising for a moment only to settle down with a squawk and flutter upon some invisible morsel. Overhead the sky was a soft, even blue, and all about them gleamed the sails of other yachts. Tom had the enjoyable sensation of perfect physical well-being. The weariness in his head had vanished, his new clothes fitted him easily, and his feet in their rubber-soled shoes of white buckskin were deliciously comfortable. He could not help recalling the time—less than fifteen months ago—when he had always been dressed uncouthly, his trousers and sleeves too short, his cuffs frayed, his neckties faded, his shoes too tight and run down at the heels. And now he was

as smart as anybody—smarter, in fact! And the change had been brought about merely by the spending of a little money. The fact that he still owed most of the money gave him only slight uneasiness—a tiny fly in the amber of his self-satisfaction—that could easily be managed, he felt sure. Allyn would lend him a hundred or so without a thought, if he asked him; he could easily make a plausible excuse. He could not bring himself to speak to his mother about the money; she would think he was going straight to perdition. Perdition? If he was, it was a pleasant place to go to!

"Well, here we are!"

Mr. Selby, lighting another cigar, sank down into one of the wicker chairs. His wife looked up placidly from her knitting.

"I don't see how you could stay down in that stuffy place!" she said.

Tom went over to where Pauline sat with a book in her lap.

"Don't you want to show me over the yacht?" he asked.

"Yes, why don't you show Mr. Kelly around?" inquired her father. "It's a good chance now, when your mamma and I are feelin' sort of sleepy."

"Come along!" cried the girl, throwing down her book. "What do you want to see first?"

"Everything! I want to see how it would feel to own one," answered Tom.

"Oh, you'll own one some time," she asserted with conviction. "Every successful man owns a yacht."

"How do you know I'll be successful?" he inquired.

"Oh, I don't know exactly," she laughed, "but I have that sort of feeling about you. I'm sure you'll get whatever you want."

She had led him as if by deliberate intention to a cushioned nook in the shadow of the bridge.

"I can see all I want of the yacht from here," declared Tom. "What a bully place to sit!"

"Isn't it? I had it fixed up just for myself. Mamma calls it 'Pauline's Paradise.' It's a wonderful place for dreaming."

"Do you ever see visions?" he asked innocently.

"I'm afraid one could hardly call them that. They are just purely material expectations—tomorrow, next week, next month."

"You like the life here, then?"

"I love it!" she enthused. "Isn't it the best we have in America? Doesn't it represent everything that everybody wants, the best society, the smartest people, the biggest yachts, the most delicious cooking, the finest sport—bathing, tennis, golf, riding, sailing? What more could you ask?"

Her words, in sharp contrast to those of Lulie Wingate the night before, were uttered with obvious sincerity.

"And yet some people—" he began——

"Oh, I know there are people," she answered quickly, "plenty of them right here in Newport, who are always crying 'Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.' They talk about the frivolity of the life

here and the terrible extravagance and all that, while they are getting all they can out of it themselves. In nine cases out of ten it's nothing but a pose. It is mostly a case of sour grapes with the people that criticise Newport. All of them, if they had the chance, would be glad enough to have big places of their own and live exactly as all the rest of us do. The people that pretend that it's wrong to like what other people have are either too old to enjoy themselves or have something the matter with them—chronic indigestion usually. Now, I'm a perfectly normal person, so far as I can see, and I just love all of it—everything, from having a French maid down to lobster Newburg," and looking straight at Tom she smiled a confident, joyous smile which seemed to embrace the entire universe of sparkling waves and white sails, including Tom himself.

Tom smiled in return. The more he saw of Pauline the more he liked her direct vision, the straightforward outpouring of her thoughts, and he felt ashamed of the sordid possibilities which had suggested themselves to him below. She was a glorious young creature, a perfect exemplification of the Roman ideal of "*Mens sana in corpore sano.*" She seemed in true accord with the vast sweep of robin's-egg blue above them, the distant circle of the horizon, the onward rush and leap of the yacht's prow against the slight roll from the Atlantic, and the languorous southwest wind that was drawing a smoky pall over the Rhode Island shore and the

far-lying islands of Buzzards Bay, shrouding them in Turner-esque mystery and already paving a path of glory for the declining sun. Didn't instinct tell him that she was right? Was there not in the harmony of nature around him all that the spirit craved?

"Well," he answered in happy agreement, "it all seems mighty good to me. I've never known much about these things, but I've noticed that those who haven't had them lose no time in getting them when they can. I suppose that if money didn't really mean a lot men wouldn't strive for it."

"Of course they wouldn't," she replied with assurance. "And the game is worth the candle, too. You read a whole lot about it being silly for men to stay down in their grimy offices all day working just for more money. Well, they're not working just for money. They're working for the future of their children, of themselves, and their business, and because they can't help working. It's a law of nature. It helps develop the country. It makes progress. It's the American spirit. It's instinctive to want to be happy and comfortable—and to work, too. If you follow your instinct, you'll be all right."

Pauline delivered this with an air of finality and Tom felt relieved that he had her permission to follow his instinct.

"Oh," he replied, in an admiring tone, "that's easy."

But all the same he was not so sure in his own mind. There would be a great old time going on if people just ran around following their instincts. He already had quite a respect for Pauline's force and intelligence, but her philosophy somehow seemed rather too simple.

"However," he added, "instinct doesn't guide everybody right. There are lots of rotters everywhere. This place must be full of them—of people 'on the make.'"

"Yes," she admitted, "it is. And a girl has to keep her eyes open here unless she wants to be fooled. But most of the social crooks are quite obvious."

"What do you mean by social crooks?"

"The people who want to get something for nothing," she retorted. "You'd be surprised at the number of them. Little German and Russian counts, some of them real and some of them bogus; pretentious people who come here simply to trade on their acquaintance with smart people in other places, fortune-hunters and social climbers generally."

"But you don't regard all social climbing as objectionable, do you?" he queried, involuntarily thinking of mamma and papa Selby on the lower deck, "because after all that is merely following the instinct for change and development of which you've been speaking."

"Exactly," she answered. "But there are social climbers who climb over the dead characters of

their friends, and who live by false pretenses. I think social ambition is as legitimate as any other, provided that it is pursued by honest methods."

It came to Tom that Pauline was herself the high priestess of ambition. Backed by her own "instinct," her capacity, her money, the man who became her husband might go far. And she, for her part, liked Tom the better the more she saw of him, or rather talked to him, for he was a receptive listener and had tact enough to ask questions which she would be glad to answer. Thus the hours flew by, Pauline becoming more and more convinced that Tom was the most attractive and the wisest man she had met in her whole life.

Down in their cosey wicker chairs Mr. and Mrs. Selby were spending an unusually quiet and comfortable afternoon.

"Those two seem to find plenty to talk about," he remarked, yawning and closing his novel. "I sneaked up to that 'paradise' of Pauline's a few minutes ago and they were arguing away to beat the band."

"I hope they weren't quarrelling," said his wife.

"I don't think so," he answered. "Pauline was just holding forth as usual. You know how she is when she gets talking about the universe."

"Yes, I know," agreed Mrs. Selby. "I can't understand a word she says, but I suppose it means something to her."

"Let's hope so at any rate," responded her husband. "Anyhow we mustn't let them get tired of each other."

It was at about this moment that the yacht shifted her course slightly eastward and began an almost imperceptible roll.

Pauline and Tom ensconced in the red-cushioned bower below the bridge observed the bow hesitate for an infinitesimal fraction of a second, stagger, and plunge downward. A sheet of white spray, iridescent in the slanting beams of the sun, leaped upward and fell with a swish upon the forward deck.

"Gracious!" cried Pauline, "mother will be frightened to death. She always is, if it's the least bit wet."

At or about the same moment the steward received a call from the after-deck.

"You go up and tell the captain," directed Mr. Selby somewhat indignantly, "to turn right around. I ordered him particularly not to go where it was rough."

"And after that, you can serve tea," added Mrs. Selby.

The sun hung like a huge red disk over Newport Harbor as the *Pauline* passed under the fort and slowly moved to her anchorage, and the old town, the islands, the golf-links, and the distant shores of Narragansett Bay were bathed in a golden sheen that slowly changed first to bronze and then to purple. The surface of the water was like a softly undulating mirror, and the air was filled with a confusion of noises, the panting of engines, the creak of oars, the rattle of blocks, the jingle of pianos, the voices of women singing, and all the

rest that go to make up the bustle and clatter of a harbor.

Pauline bade her friend good-by at the head of the gangway. The acquaintance begun at Mrs. Welfleet's was progressing almost as favorably and as rapidly as Pauline had intended that it should, and she had already secured from Tom a promise to take a short cruise with them after the tennis tournament should be over.

Tom descended to the tender, took his place in the stern sheets, the bell rang, the tiny propeller stirred the water, and the launch shot shoreward.

When some distance from the yacht Tom turned and lifted his hat to Pauline, who waved her hand in reply. He was pleased with the afternoon and with himself. Pauline was certainly an extraordinary girl, a corker. She had a mind like a steel trap. She would be able to take care of herself anywhere. Again his thoughts wandered to the Ionian Sea and the Golden Horn. How about instinct?

Why shouldn't he? It would be natural for any man to fall in love with a girl like Pauline! And in place of the pungent smell of the incoming tide he breathed the distant odors of Araby and the strange scents of the mysterious East. He was a long way from Newbury Street and from the Mountain Home House, as he stepped on shore at the Yacht Club landing.

On board the yacht Pauline walked slowly back from the gang-plank to the piano, and idly struck

a few chords as she hummed the words of one of Schumann's love-songs.

"It's been a real satisfactory afternoon," said Mrs. Selby to her husband.

"Yes," he answered. "I like that Mr. Kelly. He seems like a very sensible young fellow."

"Pauline likes him too," added his wife, as if that settled it.

XVIII

WHEN Tom, on awakening the following morning, found that the valet was somewhat slow in answering the bell he experienced a distinct feeling of irritation. What business had the fellow not to be on his job! But presently the man could be heard running along the hall and King Tom generously forgave him. He had acquired even in those brief sixty hours in Newport a vast confidence. He had made a discovery. It was not the fact that he had been well introduced, or that he was a member of an aristocratic Harvard Club, nor yet that he was the coming national champion —to which he owed his seemingly instantaneous success! These things neither singly nor collectively, he told himself, could have achieved his conquests—such as they were—of Lulie Wingate and Pauline. No, it was something beyond and above all that—his own personality! In this big world in which he was no inconspicuous figure the Scotts were, after all, nothing very wonderful and —he chuckled condescendingly—the old "Woolsack" was nothing at all! Whoever had even heard of it! A college was just a college, and one college club was like another. But one man was

not like another! There must be "something about him."

This conviction was confirmed by the further discovery that by no means all of his youthful associates possessed the same assurance. Even Raymond Dwight—who in his earlier college years had seemed to Tom to occupy an unapproachable pinnacle of social distinction—the president of the class—"a little bit off the top" of the cream of Bostonian exclusiveness—who had turned up in Newport on a visit, seemed diffident and somewhat awkward. He even acknowledged to Tom that all these ultrafashionable folk made him singularly uncomfortable. They were different somehow from the people one had known on the Back Bay.

On the privacy of Bailey's Beach during a postnatatory cigarette he confided to his club-mate that it made him feel like a cat in a strange garret not knowing who they all were—at home he knew who everybody was and his next-of-kin were, who his ancestors had been, and who, in all probability, his heirs, executors, assigns, and even his descendants would be—but here! There were so many of them that you could never hope to find out who the really right people were at all! It was disquieting—nothing fixed or settled about it! Those Selbys, for instance! Imagine their getting in on the North Shore—never! He envied Tom his ability to get on with everybody. Really Tom had developed a lot and everybody said he was cutting quite a dash!

Tom did not deny these soft impeachments and gave his friend, without saying so, the impression that some fellows developed later than others and that some were naturally fitted for wider social experiences. He admitted he got along all right—a fact due probably to his broader point of view. Boston was a pretty small place, after all, even if it was socially impeccable. For example, he had dined on Beacon Street at a formal dinner where they had not served champagne. Raymond would have to admit that such a thing was impossible in a really cosmopolitan circle. As to the Selbys, they were in a process of "transmogrification"—he had seen the word in a magazine. The next generation would be socially impregnable. Even the oldest families of Boston had been in trade originally—china merchants and that sort of thing. The Selbys were all right—solid Americans—a little near the factory as yet—but the old man had ten million. Raymond shrugged his shoulders but later Tom took an elfin satisfaction in meeting him on one of Pauline's yachting-parties.

Gradually as the weeks passed Tom began to assume a severely critical attitude toward these new friends of his whose dinners he deigned to eat. Had there been fewer roses in his path he would doubtless have been less censorious, but people took him nearly at his own valuation—as they usually do everybody—and his own valuation of himself was at that moment exceedingly high. He had in fact just learned what a swan he was. His

late mornings in bed at the Scott's, when after one of those royal Dresden or Sèvres breakfasts he indulged in day-dreams slightly narcotic with the statuesque form of the Grecian lady at precisely the most alluring distance, were enervating and afforded an undesirable opportunity for self-magnification. Instinctively he compared himself with the other men whom he met and was constantly meeting—to his own advantage. There was, he told himself, a very good reason why all these women liked him. He was a well-born, cultured Bostonian (he eliminated his mother's rather dingy origin), a graduate of Harvard and a member of a *chic* club there, athletic and at least moderately good-looking, knew everybody, was a crack tennis-player and likely to become national champion—well, what more could *anybody* want? Were the girls much to blame if they cottoned to him? On the contrary, would it not have been strange had they not done so?

Tom was ignorant of those many charming Newport homes whose owners had never been invited to a "monkey dinner," and would not have gone to one had they been asked. He did not meet any of those courtly old men and women, who having lived in most of the capitals of Europe, have chosen Newport as their residence and constitute a social circle which has no golden key.

Unfortunately, however, the life that he led soon seemed good to him. Was it not what everybody was working for? Was it not the *ne plus*

ultra? And it was his already—at twenty-two! He could begin now—to-morrow, if he chose—where others left off! There was Pa Selby, for instance, who had worked all his life putting soup and things in tin cans and who now at sixty-five was just letting up! What had he got out of it? Nothing but the chance of having Tom condescend to marry his daughter! The other old men were just the same. They had slaved like pups to get a lot of money and now they didn't know how to spend it or had spent it so freely that there was nothing left for them to buy! They were, so to speak, dog-tired of everything. During the next month Tom went to many entertainments where the struggle to escape *ennui* was only too apparent. And just as if these people knew that it would be fatal ever to stop and inquire whether or not they were really enjoying themselves they rushed madly from one thing to another in the hope that in the mere multiplicity of amusements they could evade boredom.

At the end of his first week Tom had only seen his hostess four times—once on the afternoon of his arrival, once at lunch, and twice when the family entertained at dinner. The rest of the time he was away—on yachting-parties, picnics, teas, lunches, dinner-dances, and at a host of minor entertainments. It was a curious sort of visiting, but it was agreeably independent. It was as if he had suddenly come into a wonderful inheritance—of his title to which he had previously lived in ig-

norance. Everybody seemed bent on giving him the best possible time, seemed to think him a prince of good fellows! Older men called him familiarly by his first name. Snobbish mammas with marriageable daughters eagerly sought him out. Even his classmates and the men of his own age treated him with a certain deference. What wonder that the erstwhile shabby and disgruntled Tom began to feel that all this was his due and that the world lay at his feet—to kick if he chose.

And since nothing succeeds like success and among bluffers he who bluffs best is king, Tom achieved for a brief season a *succès fou* that opened every door to him and completely turned his ignorant young head. With this came an access of assurance on his part that caused his friend Allyn untold amusement. For finding that to assert virtue was, in this society, tantamount to having it, Tom, adroitly seized every opportunity to advertise himself, in a good-natured sort of way, confidently laying claim to an inherited social position in Boston, and a manner of living that would have astounded Bridget and Aunt Eliza had they heard of it.

It is an ancient and common failing. Even in the old coffee-house days Addison speaking of the army in the *Spectator* makes Captain Sentry lament that in a profession where merit is placed in so conspicuous a view, impudence should get the better of modesty. The same thing always has been and still is true of the world at large and smart society in particular. The unscrupulous take ad-

vantage of the fact that honest folk are slow to attribute evil motives to the actions of others. They know that people are, on the whole, good-natured, easy-going, and lazy, and that they can safely presume upon these qualities at least to the extent of making statements of fact the accuracy of which will never be questioned.

So Tom, besides being known as a handsome, good-humored, clean-limbed young Yankee (which he really was), was soon surrounded by a nimbus of glory to which he was totally unentitled, arising from the fact that he was reputed to be of a lineage distinguished even in Boston—everybody persuaded himself that he had always heard of the Kellys—solidly backed by the wealth and culture of the Back Bay, and with a future foreordained to greatness by virtue of the influence of his connections.

Though Tom's attitude of condescension toward the Newport world at large included, with the exception of Lulie and Allyn, even the Scotts, it never occurred to him that to administer their complicated *ménage* must require somewhere an observing eye and a directing brain of no ordinary capacity. It would have astounded him to learn that, placing little reliance upon the honesty and assiduity of professional housekeepers, Mrs. Scott devoted as much detailed attention to the management of "Beausejour" as Mrs. Kelly did to her modest establishment on Newbury Street. Yet it was a fact that while Tom lolled above in the mornings in drowsy luxury, his rather prim and dis-

tinctly conventional hostess was down betimes overseeing the work in house and garden and enforcing rigidly the economies of lavishness. In an office somewhat less elaborate than her husband's "den," at a desk upon which stood a formidable alignment of morocco-bound note-books, she interviewed the butler, chef, and head gardener, and issued her orders for the day. She knew the exact number of quarts of milk and cream, the number of pounds of butter, the amount of wine consumed daily within her gates. Even the number of cigars placed in Tom's bedroom was a matter of record.

She was the daughter of a small shopkeeper in "upstate" New York, and had later become a teacher of singing and a drawing-room vocalist in the metropolis. Few of her acquaintances or even of her friends had any knowledge of this period of her career, for she had caught Mr. Scott young and eliminated all trace of Skaneateles by a prolonged sojourn in Europe. She had no illusions, knew the cost of everything, including her own present social position, and was quite satisfied to pay the price. She would have been astonished but not horrified to learn that she was considered snobbish and cold-blooded. On the whole, she regarded both these qualities as rather desirable. She admired her son and daughter as "smart," but judged Allyn a fool for drinking and Lulie stupid for getting herself talked about. Otherwise she was quite content with them. Mr. Scott was satisfactory. She had no complaints to make about him, and he, poor

man, after his original uxorial error in mistaking Labrador for Senegambia, accepted the lady as he found her and devoted himself to being a gentleman, in which line at the age of sixty-one he had achieved no little success. He could read and speak French, German, and Italian, and had a collection of mildly improper anecdotes in each language. He was a student of art, a connoisseur in wines, and widely read in the modern literature of most countries.

He was modest, abstemious, and his waistcoat had a concavity unfamiliar to Newport. He allowed others to do the talking, took his orders from his wife, and conducted himself both in public and private after the manner of a well-behaved curate of the established church. Like his spouse, nothing escaped his eye or his nose, yet not even in the privacy of the connubial couch did either of them discard the pose which they had assumed. They were always *comme il faut*. Like a certain celebrated lady in a famous divorce-suit, her husband was reputed never to have seen her—so to speak—in dishabille. They were to each other as they were to the world. But they played at living and acted very stupid parts, so that they seemed much duller than they really were.

Tom, in his blindness, took them for a pair of fools, for neither seemed at all familiar with those matters of ordinary knowledge which he was convinced every lady and gentleman should know, and he not infrequently put them right. Mr. Scott

particularly appeared to find much that was stimulating and entertaining in Tom's conversation, and often laughed quite unexpectedly in a mild and gentlemanly way at what he said. The longer he stayed at "Beausejour" the more Tom wondered that two such idiots could get along as they did, and one evening in a corner of the billiard-room over a glass of the Scott port he confided as much to Parradym. Under the influence of its fragrant old bouquet he launched forth into a general indictment of the individuals composing the society about them. Many, he admitted, were clever people enough, but the majority, he declared, were too stupid to live, or, if they were not stupid, utterly mannerless. This last comment was based almost exclusively upon the fact that one distinguished lady had that afternoon at the Casino shown no marked enthusiasm at meeting Tom.

"It's inconceivable to me, my dear fellow," he exclaimed, "how these old dodos here in Newport can be so dull. It's a wonder they've got any money left to live on, it would be so easy to get it away from them. And the women are so disgustingly rude! I'm surprised that you—an intelligent man—can find any pleasure in this society!"

He clicked his tongue thickly in a superior way and poured out another glass of the port. He had already consumed two cocktails, three glasses of champagne, one of claret, and a Scotch and soda, in consequence of which everything seemed very far away and rather blurred, and what he had to

say to Parry very, very important, indeed. He felt kindly toward Parradym. He was a good old sort, after all. He felt kindly toward everybody, really —what he was saying was more theoretical than anything else. He would have slapped old man Scott on the back if he'd been there—he was really quite a good sort, too, even if he was more or less of an ass.

Parradym looked at him contemplatively but good-naturedly.

"In the golden age of childhood, my dear fellow," said he, "we look upon all Olympians, and in fact everybody but ourselves, as fools. They do such ridiculous things! They're always washing and dressing up instead of having a good time playing around in the mud. And they surround us with all sorts of arbitrary and absurd rules and laws, about what to eat, and when to go to bed, and how not to get drowned—just as if anybody wanted to get drowned!"

"'Zactly!" nodded Tom benignly.

"Later we pass into another stage," continued Parry. "We see some of the reasons for these supposed absurdities and we discover that it takes brains and ability to make a living. But life still seems very simple, and our estimates of people are of the snap-shot variety and generally made without allowances. We're strong and well, and to us everybody must be strong and well. People who do not at first blush conform to our standards of intelligence or manners are uncompromisingly put down by us as fools, idiots, or ruffians."

"Oh, no!" protested Tom in a detached sort of way. "Tha's too strong, you know!"

Parradym shook his head.

"There's nothing so cruel as the judgment of youth. It has no verdict 'with extenuating circumstances.' A person is either good or bad. People are either heroes or cads. We are ready to attribute the basest of motives for the most trifling acts. We demand of our parents, our sisters, our brothers, and our friends that they should all be as perfect as the peerless princes and princesses of our fairy-books."

Tom laughed. Parry was right. No one ought to be held to any such standard as that. But his friend's face had taken on a serious expression.

"Yet as we go on," said Parradym with some earnestness, "we learn that nobody is either good or bad. And that anybody who has been obliged to live in this funny old world for thirty or forty years generally has had some sense knocked into his head, at least so far as his own self-interest is concerned. We are ready to believe that strangers or casual acquaintances are quite ready to insult or snub us on the slightest provocation, whereas men of the world discover very early in the game of life that there is nothing so expensive as unnecessary rudeness, and this lesson is soon learned by everybody who mixes much in society. In point of actual fact very few people are deliberately rude. Those that are generally turn out to be genuine fools, of which, of course, there is a scattering still about. But I think I'm right in saying that the

only safe assumption to work on is that the ordinary person whom you meet, whether man or woman, is probably very much like other people, neither a hero nor a villain, anxious to appear to the best advantage before everybody, quite willing to go half-way, not disposed to conscious rudeness, ready to return favor for favor, and more than able to look out for him or her self so far as dollars and cents are concerned. The man whom you regard as a 'stuffed shirt,' simply because he looks like a boiled cod or an unboiled rabbit, will probably end by making a fool of you. He can't have nosed around for half a lifetime without having learned to go in when it rains or to keep out of copper stocks. He looks like a cod because his forebears looked like 'em. Not because he's got anything the matter with his head or his heart. Most people are moderately honest, nobody absolutely so. 'Diogenes' job,' as some one has said, 'is still open.' But take people by and large and they'll give you back just about what you hand them. And there's usually a reason if they don't—they may not have seen you, or heard what you said, or they may be absent-minded. Just because Smith doesn't bow to you on Fifth Avenue isn't any real ground for supposing that he has a mortal grudge against you or wishes to make you an enemy for life. That is arrogating to oneself too much prominence in Smith's cosmos. Instead of tryii to insult you, he is probably wondering where put his opera-tickets——"

Parradym chuckled and laid his hand affectionately on Tom's knee as the others rose to join the women in the drawing-room.

"Be a little easier on 'em, my boy!" he whispered.

XIX

It was half after one the next morning when Tom, the last guests having left the house, made his way with some difficulty toward the royal suite. He had had a very pleasant evening, and while he had been somewhat noisy in talking to the women after dinner, he had not been conspicuously alcoholic in a gathering where entire sobriety was the exception rather than the rule. People were good-natured with Tom because most of them liked him and because he was rather the fashion. It is doubtful if at this period any kind friend would have taken it upon himself to hint that his conduct was not exemplary, however extreme it might have been. But it was due to the number of brandies that he had consumed, and not to the natural amativeness of his disposition, that he presumed to hold the hands of several young ladies—including Pauline's—somewhat longer than the occasion demanded. Nevertheless, as he told himself, he had "got away with it." He had already discovered by experience that only the bold had favor th the fair. The bolder you were the better, par ularly with the older women. "If the women a older, you have to be bolder," he told Allyn. I had learned this from observing the success of

certain young scion of the local nobility—a most unattractive person—whose head was a couple of sizes too large for the rest of his body and whose features resembled those of the late Mr. Bunny. Yet in spite of his physical limitations this peculiar youth had an astonishing vogue with the opposite sex.

"All you need is *la confiance!*" explained the pimply Lothario with a superior grin.

This philandering apparently occupied a large portion of the working hours of the men in society, particularly after five o'clock in the afternoon. Every Jack had his Jill, even if both were fully aware that the arrangement was only temporary. Trial engagements—if not trial marriages—were obviously popular. One baby-blue-eyed virgin of nineteen boasted to Tom that she was engaged to eight "men" all at once. It seemed to be quite customary to be engaged to two or three, and the intercourse between the sexes at Newport consisted largely of a sort of amorous dallying, half jocular and half serious, coloring everything with a romantic glamour. If a young man was not frankly pursuing some girl or married woman, he was viewed as peculiar, to say the least, and treated as the legitimate object of suspicion. Every incentive possible was offered to the love game, and Tom, trifling with passion along with the others, discovered to his satisfaction that his pursuit of Lulie Wingate—of the guest for the daughter of the house where he was visiting—was almost *de rigueur*. Thus

he found it easy to devise meetings with her, for which she showed no disinclination. Always, however, their conversation had flowed along the lines of that first evening when she had assumed the becoming pose of a misunderstood wife and daughter. It was a charming pose, albeit Tom knew it to be one. But he liked it none the less and played up to her spiritedly with his recently acquired gloss of culture. Yet this evening, when unexpectedly they met at the turn in the long corridor of the bachelor wing, he somehow felt that the time had come to put things on a less distantly sentimental and more intimate and vital footing. Had he been less exhilarated it is doubtful if this "caveman stuff"—as he afterward described it—would have appealed to him. He would, at any rate, have considered before he acted as precipitately as he did.

As it was, he did not ask himself what on earth she could be doing there at nearly two o'clock in the morning. He only knew that he was face to face with her in the stillness of the night—alone in a remote part of the house. That did occur to him. She was coming quite rapidly along the hall as if she had been somewhere, and the red silken hangings reflected the glow of the shaded electric lamps along the walls, and gave her cheeks a transparent crimson tinge that by contrast with the black storm-clouds of her hair made her skin delicately exquisite—like a picture he had once seen of a girl shading a candle with her hand. She hesit and almost stopped at sight of him, then came

toward him with a smile. Tom, emboldened by his evening of success, forgot that she had never yet allowed him to touch her hand. He saw only the crimson, translucent color of her skin and the smouldering fires in her black eyes.

He was happy and more than a little drunk, believed that Lulie liked him and that she would go quite a way with him if she had the chance and —well!—he felt *la confiance*. He did not question the propriety under all the circumstances of his making rather violent, if not forcible, love to this experienced daughter of his hostess. If the things he had heard about her were all true—! She had not been immune by any means from the after-dinner attacks of the scandal specialists—male and female. And had he not caught her himself in the dark with a man? So he sidled up and told her that he loved her merely, as if he had forgotten to tell her so at dinner. There was a vast difference between this declaration and that other of less than two months ago made to Evelyn—under the elms of Class Day—that declaration which had elicited no response from the recipient. But in one respect at least this was a much more genuine affair. He had never had any real confidence that Evelyn would consent to be his wife, but he did have a certain amount of confidence that Lulie might consent to have an affair of some sort with him. And his literary sense of the proprieties—which had led him to propose to Evelyn—now rushed to the support of his desire and impelled him at least to essay

the conquest of Lulie. "The time, the place, and the girl!" All that sort of thing. Every suggestive influence of the so-called comic-opera stage of twenty years ago was stirring in him at that moment. Why, if he didn't kiss her, what a chump she would think him! She probably got kissed all the time. He'd kiss her, anyway.

Probably many a decent girl has been similarly cornered and, perhaps, escaped only by yielding partially to force of circumstances. But Lulie had had a short lifetime of lovers, alcoholic and otherwise. Therefore, when Tom pushed her against the scarlet curtains into the embrasure of the window, she neither shrieked nor dealt him a blow in the face. On the contrary, she laughed more or less good-naturedly, squeezed the hot hand which had seized hers, and said chaffingly:

"Heavens, Mr. Kelly! How ardent we suddenly are!"

She stood half-hidden, her marble-white arms and neck gleaming softly amid the silken hangings, a teasing smile on her lips. How slim and round and soft those arms looked to Tom! He wanted to press his lips to them, to wind them about his neck. Nature was getting the upper hand with this somewhat intoxicated young gentleman.

"I'm not joking, Lulie!" he panted. "I mean it! Lulie—little girl—I love you!"

He tried to clasp her to him but the curtains i terfered, and stepping away, clear of them, s turned angrily upon him.

"Let me by!" she cried, with a metallic ring in her voice. "You're crazy! Let go of me! Let me by—do you hear?"

Tom gave a brusque laugh. Of course she had to pretend to be angry. He threw both arms about her.

"Kiss me first!"

She shrank from him and struggled to disengage herself.

Then, finding this to be impossible, she faced him again and clutched the friendly hangings.

"Some one might come along here any moment! Please let me go!" she begged in a whisper.

"Then kiss me!"

He had torn her left hand from the curtain and had crushed both her arms tightly to her sides. He would have his way with her no matter what happened. She had ceased to struggle, but had thrown her head as far back as she could beyond the reach of his lips. And then—at the very climax of this interesting scene—Tom suddenly found himself without any inspiration to go on with it. Desire had blazed in him as he had broken down her defenses, but now that he was inside the enclosure, for some curious reason he had lost the spirit of the adventure. Yet this was no time to play the hesitating lover. He must go on with the motions.

"I love you, Lulie," he heard himself repeat, reaching for her lips.

"Let me go!" she repeated hoarsely. "For the love of God!"

He experienced a moment of self-reproach. Supposing she really didn't want his caresses? Suppose he was forcing himself on her? That would be a fine performance! There was something also decidedly awkward in their position, for holding her helpless as he was, her weight almost caused him to lose his equilibrium. He didn't know exactly what to do. If he kissed her, they would probably go over all at once with a crash! He had ceased to want to kiss her—that way. He didn't like forcing people. She would probably hate him forevermore. Nobody liked to be man-handled, least of all a high-spirited girl like Lulie. No, she could go! Instinctively he released his right hand and steadied himself with the curtain. He was now holding Lulie only with his left arm, and she could easily have escaped. He expected her—was waiting for her—to do so. He looked down into her face. Her eyes were shut, her lips slightly parted. By Jove! She was a pretty girl! In another instant his lips were upon hers.

They were in this very definite position when a masculine voice became suddenly audible behind them. Lulie thrust herself quickly from him.

"Let me go! What do you mean!" she shrieked savagely at the unfortunate Tom.

"I *beg* your pardon!" said the voice.

Tom pulled himself together as best he could. A tall man clad in a vicuna dressing-gown and smoking a cigarette was standing about ten feet distant. He was clean-shaven, well-built, athletic.

Blind fury took possession of Tom. What business had this fellow to spy on them? He'd show this peeper how to behave himself! Lulie had fled down the corridor and disappeared.

"Mind your own business!" snarled our hero.

"I beg your pardon," repeated the gentleman in the dressing-gown. "But, you know, it is my business in a sort of way."

"How is it your business, I'd like to know?" demanded Tom in a bullying tone.

"Well, you see," politely continued the other, "you seemed to be kissing my wife. I may be mistaken, of course. But I was quite distinctly of that impression. Come now, weren't you kissing her?"

Tom was too taken aback to make any reply. So this was Wingate! In a flash he recognized the man he had seen lighting his cigar in the garden with Lulie. What on earth was Wingate doing at the Scotts' house? And why in Heaven's name had he been such an idiot as to tackle Lulie that way before finding out how she came to be there? He was entirely sober by now. Mr. Wingate was regarding him with slightly amused surprise.

"I don't think we've met!" he remarked. Then he added curiously: "Anyhow, I think you're just a little drunk, you know. Well, she's an all-fired pretty woman, my lad—good luck to you! And good night!"

Tom did not reply to Mr. Wingate. On the contrary, he most ungraciously left him standing by the fatal crimson curtains which had indirectly

been the cause of the whole trouble. He wanted a drink and he wanted it quick—with ice in it. He entered his room, filled a tall glass with Scotch, cracked ice, and carbonic, and threw himself at full length on a *chaise longue.*

Here was a nice mess, no matter how you looked at it! He had been caught with the goods! To-morrow Wingate would probably smash his face. But why hadn't he done so then and there? Because of Lulie, probably. By George! it really was hard on her. She wasn't to blame at all, but she never would be able to make her husband believe it. In fact, it had not occurred to Tom to attempt to put in a defense for her. But then, nothing had occurred to him! He was a slob—that was just what he was! He lit cigarette after cigarette and gradually his thoughts straightened out. Of course to-morrow he'd have to go and exonerate Lulie and apologize to Wingate. Then he'd have to apologize to Lulie! Wingate had been rather decent on the whole. Why had he tried to kiss Lulie, anyway? He kicked his heels together disgustedly, lying on the couch.

Just at that moment the door was opened cautiously and Parradym appeared. Tom felt rather glad to see him. The "Little Brother of the Rich" had evidently been for a stroll before going to bed.

"Well," he remarked, "as my friend Monte Flagg says, nothing exceeds like sexcess!"

"I suppose you think that's funny!" retorted

Tom gloomily from the couch. "If you only knew the mess I'm in you'd think it was tragic! 'Sexcess'! Oh, Lord!"

Parradym squirted himself out a half-glass of carbonic without ice.

"Oh, I know—I met Wingate in the hall. Says he caught you kissing his wife—or vice versa—he doesn't quite seem to know which."

"He needn't worry," answered Tom. "I'm the criminal."

"There's a—excuse me—a rather humorous side to it," continued Parry. "The fact is that our young friends had just had a sort of reconciliation at the Welfleets' garden-party, the final result of which was that Lulie promised to be very, very good, and Jim swore never, never to be naughty again, and thereupon madam invited son-in-law over here to stay for a while. He came this afternoon and has the 'gold-and-black room' next to mine. Lulie, of course, remains in her own suite in the main part of the house."

Tom writhed internally with chagrin. He'd put his foot in it now, all right. No wonder Lulie was mad. Just patched it up with hubby and caught, apparently, *in flagrante delicto* at two in the morning! And what would Wingate do about it? Lulie would never forgive him—never! Well, what difference would that make if she was going back to her husband? However, suppose her husband wouldn't take her back after what had happened? What would be his position in the matter? A jolly

ass he had made of himself! "Sexcess"! Bah! He uttered the word contemptuously under his breath so that Parradym heard it.

"Exactly," nodded the philosopher, lighting a small claro cigar. "A jolly mess and a jolly ass! But, frankly, I regard this as a rather lucky incident—for you. Suppose, for example, Lulie and Jim hadn't just made up, and when you met her in the hall she hadn't been scared to death that some one would see you both, eh? The incident mightn't have ended in the hall, d'y' see?"

Tom flushed crimson. The conversation seemed bordering on the indelicate. He didn't mind that sort of thing about other people, but it was very different when you were the subject of it. Moreover, for some unknown reason, he wanted Parry's good opinion. He felt abashed and humiliated, for he had certainly done Lulie a great wrong—as it had turned out. He had not only insulted the daughter of his hostess, but he had compromised her in the eyes of her husband. Parry's opinion that it might have been worse was small consolation at the moment.

"You know there's an awful lot of rot written and talked about this sex business," said Parradym, taking a sip of carbonic. "Don't mind my mentioning it, do you? But, you see, I've drifted around now for a good many years—for more than twice as many as you've existed—and I've used my eyes besides talking with all kinds of people. Take my word for it, the emphasis on sex is the grossest ex-

aggeration in human affairs. Use your common sense. It isn't mating-time all the year round!"

"Seems to be—*here!*" answered Tom.

"A sort of artificial spring induced by champagne, French novels, and *risque* conversation."

"A sort of 'hothouse'?" suggested Tom, reviving.

Parradym eyed him sharply.

"You're feeling better!" he announced. "But let me take this chance to speak seriously. Suppose all the poets and playwrights and novelists suddenly began to sing and write about the glories of Scotch whiskey or saddle of mutton. We've drunk whiskey and we've eaten mutton—or our friends have. But they don't dream of either every night or spend their days planning to get them. Look around. Most people are able to live quiet, regular lives without coveting their neighbors' wives. The sex impulse—like the impulse to eat—is a real one, of course, but that it occupies the thoughts of most men—or women—the greater part of the time is a rank fiction. It isn't as strong in the average person as the impulse of a hungry man for food. Mind you, I'm talking about physical desire. It doesn't begin to be as influential in our lives as the loyalty of a man to his wife or his affection for his parents, or his love of country. But the way they talk here and in the cities you'd be led to suppose that people thought of nothing else. It isn't so. It's largely a literary fiction—which, unfortunately, is accepted as true by playgoers and novel readers.

The real France isn't the France of the Folies Bergère any more than Rector's or the Café Martin is the real New York. But mob psychology is such that self-respecting people will go into a theatre and for the time being, at any rate, accept an entirely fictitious standard of morality as their own. You can go to a musical show any night in the week and find straight-laced old maids snickering at jokes that by daylight would chill their blood. Staid old papas harbor the mad idea that the only proper way to treat a chambermaid is to chuck her under the chin—until they try it. And so it goes. It is the thing here, for example, to pretend to be jaded and worldly wise. You may be a confirmed teetotaller, but you must talk vintage champagnes. You may be a bred-in-the-bone Puritan, but you must ape the amativeness of the comic-opera tenor, and hint at imaginary conquests. How many of these people do you suppose actually experience any stimulus from the contiguity of a member of the other sex? Not one in twenty! And, if they did, how many decent young girls or young fellows would permit such thoughts to linger in their minds? You hear all kinds of stories about the people in society, but my experience is that very few of 'em are true. In a word, my son, don't base your conduct on an artificial theory, an imaginary idea that everybody is really on the loose. They're not! Moreover, the majority of 'em wouldn't want to be, even if they could have the chance. This by way of caution in case you might attempt

an osculatory adventure with—shall we say Mrs. Welfleet?"

"God forbid!" groaned Tom.

"That's a good youth!" smiled Parry. "Now to-morrow make your peace—if you can—with Mrs. Wingate."

"How about Mr. Wingate?"

"He'll not bother you. Indeed, I fancy that he almost regards himself as being under a debt of obligation to you."

"To me! How?"

"Well, you see, Jim has never been able to get anything very definite on Lulie up to this time, and now you have come forward to supply, as it were, a long-felt want."

Tom did not understand.

"How would you like to play the rôle of co-respondent in the divorce court?" asked Parry, chuckling. "Good night. Pleasant dreams!"

Tom gazed somewhat aghast at Parry's retreating coat-tails. Could the old fellow really have spoken seriously? Corespondent in a divorce suit? It wasn't by any means impossible. His eyes reverted to the statuesque form of the Grecian Annette Kellerman upon the wall. And what had he got out of it? Nothing at all. He had forcibly kissed a lady who had just left her husband after a friendly call. He had incurred her permanent enmity probably, and in all likelihood would have a fight on his hands, besides, with her stronger if not better half. A good evening's work! "Wingate

versus Wingate." He could see his name featured in the paper at the head of a column. What would his mother say?

His mother! He had not thought of her for a month. What had made him think of her? Had anything made him think of her? He had an uneasy sort of feeling that something had. He remembered now—there was a letter from her lying unopened on the side-table.

Rather carelessly Tom, with the gold-enamelled paper-cutter slit the familiar envelope. It was small and square, of cheap paper, bought by the pound. On that polished table amid the heavy silver it looked almost like a letter from a servant. Tom had always objected to having his mother use such cheap stationery, but she had refused persistently to buy any other. The paper was particularly offensive to him because of the crude embossed representation of the Boston State House in the upper left-hand corner. Yet the hand in which the common envelope was addressed was fine and well formed—almost like steel engraving. Tom admitted as he looked at the envelope that his mother's handwriting was certainly very nice.

Her "penmanship" was, in fact, the sole, surviving remnant of her polite education as a young lady of refined antecedents in Chelsea. It was not without a stab of remorse that Tom opened the letter. He was too honest not to admit that he had grossly neglected her. But his mother's very self-effacement, her extraordinary ability even at

her somewhat advanced age to take care of herself without assistance, had blinded him, and was still blinding him, to the truth of the situation, which was that she was an old lady who ought never to have been permitted to go off alone, and who should have had the most constant and tender care. But she had always managed to get along, and Tom took it for granted that she would continue to do so indefinitely. However, he felt a little badly, as he unfolded her letter, that he had not written to her.

MacNaughton Cottages,
Bethlehem, New Hampshire.

My Dear Son:

It is a long time since I have heard from you, but I suppose you are working very hard getting ready for the tennis tournament. [He made a wry mouth.] I came up here over a month ago with Bridget, who went back next day to her sister's at Nantasket. I have a very nice room here with good board for twelve dollars per week. But it seems very expensive to me. Usually I have got very good accommodations for ten dollars, and at the Mountain Home House we only paid seven dollars. So I shall probably go home somewhat earlier than I expected, especially on account of having to pay Bridget's fare. I have not been feeling quite as well as last summer and there is nobody staying here that I know, so I shall not mind going home so much. I take walks and look at the mountains, and sometimes in the evenings there is a lecture or concert. There is a gentleman and lady with their little daughter who sit at my table and who seem quite nice. I think their name is Smith. Now, Tom, do write to me, for I am very lonely when I do not hear from you. I miss you very much. The older I grow the more I miss you when you are away from me.

But I do not worry, because I know you are a good boy and take Christ for your example. I hope you do not forget to read a chapter every day and to ask for His guidance. God bless you, Tom.

Your loving mother,
CAROLINE MARIA KELLY.

Tom closed his eyes and bit his lips. The letter had been lying there two days unopened! Poor mother! She was asleep now probably in a little wooden bed in a tiny hotel bedroom, with a straw carpet and rickety wash-stand, with servants tramping around over her head. She oughtn't to go travelling alone like that. Supposing she got sick? As soon as the tournament was over he would go up and stay with her. But even as he made the resolve the vision of the fly-specked ceiling of a hotel dining-room swam before his eyes. "Beefsteak—codfish and cream—rare or well done!" His eye wandered around the luxurious appointments of the room in which he was reclining, at the cigars and cigarettes, the aerated waters, the magazines, the silken bed, the Grecian beauty! Once more he thought of Lulie and could feel her slender, pliant body in his arms, her soft lips beneath his kiss. Perhaps she hadn't minded so much, after all! Her struggles had not been very violent. What a tantalizing girl she was! Already he had forgotten all about his mother in the thought of the other woman.

He undressed slowly and tumbled into bed, whe he lay wide-eyed in the graying light. Supp

there was a scandal, where would that leave him with Pauline? The old Selbys were nothing if not respectable—were sticklers for respectability. He realized suddenly and with great distinctness that a liaison with a married woman, however pretty, would be a poor substitute for a marriage with a charming millionairess like Pauline. At any rate, he should have made sure of Pauline first! He writhed at the consciousness of the fool he had made of himself. He must patch the thing up somehow with Wingate—eat crow. He mustn't lose Pauline! And yet it was not of her but of Lulie that he dreamed when he finally fell asleep.

It was nearly noon when he awoke and the ceiling above his head was bathed in ripples of sunlight, so resembling the dancing catoptric globules which he had watched from his crib as a child that unconsciously his eyes sought as well for the steel engraving of the Madonna and Child and the worsted motto of "Look unto me and be ye saved" that had hung upon the walls of his mother's bedroom in Newbury Street. Had he dreamed that he had grown up and gone to college and visited at a place called Newport? Was he still only a little boy eating out of a paper bag Aunt Eliza's pumpkin-seeds? The mist of the years clouded his mental vision. There was a moment or two of actual uncertainty, and then the Grecian lady swam into his ken and usurped the place of the Madonna, while the invocation to be saved dissolved entirely like the Cheshire cat in "Alice in Wonderland." Yes,

this was Newport! Nobody wanted to be saved in Newport! He rubbed his eyes and yawned.

From without came the song of robins, the cool touch of the ocean. He stalked to the open window, stretching himself luxuriously. The rest of the world was awake and about its piffling business! It was pretty comfortable to be a guest. Old Parry had a long head, after all! No responsibility—no expense—no anxiety. It was good to be young! To be liked—to like! To hold a beautiful girl in your arms! There was the very spot he had first seen her less than a month ago—there on the bench in the rose-garden. Something on the bench caught his eye—a closed book placed there with ostentatious neglect. A delicious wave of excitement engulfed him. This might be her method of communicating with him. He hurried into his clothes, thrusting headlong from his mind every cautionary consideration. His remorse, his humiliation, his resolutions for the future, all vanished like the motto on the wall.

A few moments and his feet were sinking deliciously into the soft turf of the rose-garden, as he sauntered, a cigarette between his lips, carelessly toward the bench, and with an eye roving for peepers, seated himself upon it. Then he dropped his hand over the book and twisted it around so that he could read the title, "The Greatest Thing in the World!" His heart thumped. He knew what *that* was—"Love"! What a little devil she was! To think of anything like that! He turned back the cover. Her initials were there in pencil—

"L. S. W."—nothing else—yes, what was that scrawl at the bottom—"page 137"? Smiling, Tom turned expectantly to the designated page. A single phrase in a conversation had been lightly underlined—"to-night at twelve." Clever! There in the rose-garden, of course, a place convenient for him. Then she hadn't minded. She was in love with him! She herself was seeking a rendezvous! Could he wait twelve hours before again holding her in his arms?

He impatiently recalled the fact that he had accepted an invitation to join the Selbys on their yacht that afternoon. What a bore! What was the prosaic Pauline compared to this dark-eyed daughter of the night? As bread to caviare; as milk to spiced wine! Away with dull respectability —away with Mrs. Grundy—let youth and love have their fling! Yet at the very height of his spasm of exaltation Tom carefully scrutinized the fly-leaf to determine whether or not it had ever before been used for the same purpose, and satisfied himself sufficiently that it had not.

That Tom should see neither his host nor hostess for an entire day or even for several days was nothing unusual. And on this particular day, had he not already made engagements for lunch and dinner, he would undoubtedly have done so rather than face an embarrassing situation consequent upon a disclosure of his escapade with Lulie. He had thought seriously of terminating his visit, yet he could not bring himself to surrender the comforts

of his present accommodations without strong reason. Accordingly, he determined to find out how the land lay from Lulie before doing anything. He had an irritatingly peaceful afternoon on the yacht, during which Pauline made it more evident than ever that she regarded herself as having a lien upon him and gave him several opportunities for making love to her, which he embraced but half-heartedly. How different she was from Lulie—or even Evelyn. Why, the girl was all ready to throw herself at his head after an acquaintance of only three weeks! Pa Selby, too, had shown a rising interest in Tom's future and seemed disappointed that his plans were so unformulated.

"What you want to do, my young feller," he told him confidentially over the taffrail, "is to get close to money. Get as close as you can to it, and stick there! Money makes money. Stands to reason. One feller buys and sells cucumbers. Well, he makes a cucumber profit—thirty per cent, maybe, on a thousand crates of 'em. What does it amount to—a few dollars, and it takes him just as long and as much hard work as if he was buying and selling gold. Now, if you deal in money, you make a money profit. You get me? Suppo instead of a crate of cucumbers, worth three dolla you trade in a block of bonds worth a milli dollars. Very likely you don't make as big a pe cent profit, but you make a quick turnover and y figure that profit on a million dollars instead few thousand."

"But where do I get the money to buy the bonds?" inquired Tom, sincerely interested.

'Stand in with the big fellows," answered Selby. "Go in on their deals. It's as easy for a good-lookin' young chap to get next to millionaires as it is to farmers or dry-goods men. But the great thing is to keep close to money, and folks that have it, all the time. Seize your opportunities and never let go. It's as easy to make twenty-five thousand a year as twenty-five hundred."

"Well, just show me how, will you?" pleaded Tom, with a laugh.

"Sure, I will!" retorted his host. "Now, if you ain't got any other plan, why don't you start in as a stock-broker? I trade a good deal and I'll give you my business and speak a good word for you to my friends. Every hundred shares you sell you get twelve dollars and a half. That makes a hundred and twenty-five dollars on every thousand, don't it? Well, sometimes I trade as high as ten thousand shares a day."

Tom mentally calculated that if his genial friend not only bought, but also sold, ten thousand shares of stock in one day he, Tom, could make two thousand five hundred dollars by doing nothing save execute the order.

"Well," he answered, "I should think that would be a very pleasant business. I'll talk to you again about it."

"My business alone would be worth twenty-five thousand a year to you," Selby assured him.

"And it's yours—if you want it. Just say the word! I've taken a great fancy to you, my lad. You're the kind of young feller I like. I'm not the only one—either!" he added with a saurian wink.

The moon had risen high over the trees about "Beausejour" when Tom left the dance which had followed his dinner-party, and stole cautiously to the silver-flooded rose-garden. The night breeze was so light that hardly a leaf stirred and the flowers stood motionless upon their stalks.

Out of the shadow of the high hedge the white marble of the garden-seat peered like a sheeted ghost. The night was so still that he could plainly hear the distant waves upon the rocks and the muted strains of the waltz from the mansion he had just left. Each individual grass blade at his feet was clearly visible. The night was somehow subdued, toned down, and yet the constituent elements in the scene had a sharper quality even than by day. His hand, for instance, as he lit his cigarette, was a brilliant marble hand. It was the flame of the match that seemed pale—glowing like the ghost of the Royal Dane. He sat down on the warm stone. What would Lulie say to him? What did this meeting portend? He had dreamed of yachting amid the Ionian Isles with Pauline, why not with Lulie? How much more attractive the idea! Lulie had infinitely more beauty, more cleverness, more *chic*, more money. If a fellow was going to cut loose from conventionality, why not get something for it? The Scott money was as good as the Selbys'.

That she was a married woman—a fact that had at first somewhat disturbed him—could be easily remedied at Reno or somewhere. They could steal aboard a steamer that very night, free to voyage to distant, palm-fringed lands, to loiter in foreign cities, to wander hand in hand over the wide world, to be wafted in a—what was it?—in a dahabeah up the Nile, he playing Mark Antony to her Cleopatra on moonlit nights such as this, gazing from the deck over silver sands that lost themselves in the stars.

There was a faint rustle along the hedges and his heart leaped in tumult as Lulie, a filmy wrap thrown across her sloping shoulders, glided silently into the enchanted circle of the rose-garden.

"Lulie!" he whispered, rising to his feet and tossing away his cigarette.

She did not answer him but glanced swiftly about the garden, and then motioned with her hand toward the seat. He could not distinguish the expression on her face, but she seemed quite self-possessed in spite of her evident caution. Clearly, she was not agitated, and yet he did not fear her wrath. Why had she come to him? He was trembling as she sank down beside him upon the marble bench.

"Oh, Tom!" she said quickly, turning a sad, reproachful face toward his. "Oh, you foolish, reckless boy!"

"I was crazy!" he answered. "I don't know how I came to do it. But you were—you *are* so lovely!"

She gave a low laugh.

"What possessed you to do such a thing before *him—then—there?*" she asked. She had let her head fall slightly forward, and the moonlight, stealing through the hedge, fell upon the delicate curve of her white neck just below her flat little ear. He had stopped trembling. A new and fateful courage had come over him. She had sought him voluntarily; she was not angry with him; she only quarrelled with the time and place of his enforced caress.

Putting his arm around her without opposition, he bent over and kissed her where the moonlight fell.

"It's done now!" he said. "Oh, Lulie! I do love you!"

XX

THE expectant storm at "Beausejour" did not, for unknown reasons, eventuate. For several days Tom lived in momentary anticipation of a collision with Wingate. Not that he cared particularly so far as he himself or even Lulie was concerned, yet he naturally disliked the idea of being the cause of a scandal in a house where he was a visitor. But Wingate vanished as suddenly as he had made his appearance—as suddenly as his curious reconciliation with Lulie had been rendered abortive. No one, not even Allyn, commented upon his departure. He apparently was neither wanted nor missed. On the other hand, Tom thought, or perhaps imagined, that he observed a certain added stiffness in his hostess's manner, and a less hearty appreciation of his jokes and conversation on the part of her husband. The excitement of the double game he was now playing, however, enabled him to dismiss this aspect of the matter from his mind. It was "all in his eye," he concluded. Even if Wingate had "put up a holler" about Lulie to Mrs. Scott, they would naturally discount anything he might say. It was most unlikely that they would believe either the truth or any variation upon it that a jealous husband might elaborate.

Other considerations made him less easy. One of these was that he had been obliged to borrow money several times from Allyn. While he fully expected to be able to repay it, the fact that his mother was cutting short her vacation for lack of funds made him feel more or less like a criminal. He justified his own luxury and idleness as compared with her shabby surroundings and meagre comforts by the always flimsy and now threadbare excuse that his present mode of life and companions offered an opportunity for future success whereby both his mother and himself would greatly profit. If he married an heiress, and he could do so as easily as he could snap his finger, would not it mean luxury to her for the rest of her days? Of course it would, he assured himself. And yet he knew in his heart that if he did anything of the kind, not one cent of any such blood-money would she accept or touch.

Yet as he plunged deeper and deeper into his affair with Lulie he managed to smother the thought of his mother. She would be all right. He'd play out his game at Newport while he had the chance, and go back home with a pot of money! He'd *send* home a pot of money, anyhow, even if he didn't go himself. He couldn't help it. The choice had narrowed down, he told himself, to either Pauline or Lulie. There was more *tang* to Lulie, but she might not want to marry him; and maybe—horrid thought!—her money was in trust. Pauline was safer, much safer for a lot of reasons, and yet he couldn't get up much excitement about being owned

by Pauline. At times even the vision of yachting with her amid the Ionian Isles was marred by the suspicion that she would certainly insist on being the one to select the precise islands amid which they were to yacht. She would "run" him just as she ran father. He would be nothing more than a highly salaried companion, a sort of royal consort, an American Prince Albert without a memorial. There *was* something mid-Victorian about Pauline! She had all the solid British virtues; the regard for property; the horror of the unconventional. If she had regarded it as proper and young lady-like to use the term, she would doubtless have stigmatized Lulie Wingate as a "scarlet woman." She often referred to her in terms which left no doubt as to her meaning, although she had not the slightest inkling of Tom's interest in her. In fact, she was complaisant in her conviction that Tom was hers and hers alone.

Thus Mr. Kelly found himself in the delicate, if not embarrassing, position of being obliged to make passionate love to one lady in order to keep her interest, and to temper his attentions to another lest he be snapped up too quickly, while yet evincing enough devotion to hold the field against all comers. It must be admitted that in spite of his inexperience he did both of these things to a nicety. Youth quickly learns to love generically. In truth, that wise observer Allyn, who watched our young rake's progress with amused tolerance, gave it as his opinion that if opportunity

offered, it was not impossible that his visitor might take on still another affair—with a widow, this time, perhaps—which prophecy came true in a measure in a totally unexpected manner.

It was after a very noisy lunch-party at the Scotts, on one of the succeeding Sundays, that Tom made the acquaintance of a lady who was to play a prominent part in his subsequent career. He had not noticed her particularly at the table, being engrossed on either side with the customary debutante, but when the men, after a few moments in Mr. Scott's smoking "den"—an elegant apartment finished in quartered oak and hung with old English masters—rejoined the ladies in the garden, he observed a stout, white-haired woman, with a leathery complexion, sitting on the terrace surrounded by a group which seemed to be listening with the utmost deference to what she had to say.

"Who's that old party?" he asked of Allyn.

"That's Mrs. Rutherford Jones," answered his friend, "otherwise known as the 'duchess.' You've heard of her, of course? Well, she's the whole thing here. Eccentric as a March hare, but a good sort, all the same. Be sure and don't offend her, whatever you do!"

Tom noticed Lulie Wingate, Pauline Selby, Parradym, and Pennington among those standing about Mrs. Jones, with several others of the younger members of the party.

"She likes young people," said Allyn, lowering his tone. "And her wish is a command."

As they crossed the terrace Tom heard a shrill voice suddenly exclaim in a dictatorial tone:

"Who is that handsome young man? Bring him to me at once!"

"There she blows!" whispered Allyn. "She's sighted you! We must go and make obeisance." And he led Tom toward Mrs. Jones while the others made way for them.

"My dear duchess!" began Allyn, making a sweeping bow and laying his hand on his heart, "allow me to present one of your most ardent admirers—Mr. Thomas Kelly."

The duchess nodded briskly at Tom and gave him her hand.

"Well, young man," she cried, "what are you doing here in this modern Babylon? Oh, tennis? There's no harm in that; on the contrary, I like athletic young men—when they are not utterly stupid. But you do not look stupid at all. I am sure you are quite clever. Only you must not be too clever—like Parradym here! It would be a catastrophe to have two Parradyms! One is enough. We keep him around as a sort of buffer—to ward off evil spirits in the shape of people with brains. If one of those awful intellectual people is coming to dinner I send for Parry and say: 'Parry, what will stump this professor?' And he writes something on a slip of paper and I put it in my lap, and when the soup is passed I look at the poor professor and say sternly: 'What do you think about the Iconoclastic Schism?' And that is the

end of the professor. Eh, Parry, you wicked old man?"

And she shook a tortoise-shell lorgnette at Parradyn, who laughed good-naturedly.

"I commend Mr. Kelly to your good graces," he said. "You will find him anxious to please, sober, truthful, orthodox, and polite."

"An excellent recommendation!" replied the duchess. "I wish I could say as much for my butler. But if I could, he wouldn't be my butler, would he? He'd be Archbishop of Canterbury—except for his orthodoxy. I understand it is no longer smart to be orthodox. If one is to be *chic*, one must be a sceptic—at least, in private. Now, Mr. Kelly, what have you to say for yourself? Do you know perchance what the 'Iconoclastic Schism' was?"

Poor Tom wished he could sink through the grass. He glanced helplessly around the circle of amused faces. They had all suffered this sort of baiting themselves, and knew how he felt. By a peculiar coincidence, however, he did remember the "Iconoclastic Schism" for the reason that the name had been bandied about as a sort of joke among the boys during his Freshman year.

"It was the row between the Pope and the Isaurian Emperor Leo, who wanted to smash all the images, wasn't it?" he inquired.

Mrs. Jones emitted a cackle of delight while the others gave unmistakable evidence of astonishment at Tom's extraordinary learning.

"Just hear the lad!" she cried. "'Out of the

mouths of babes—' Parradym, you must look to your laurels! This young person is an Admirable Creighton—nothing less! I've got a painter-fellow who's been acting as my Grand Vizier, but I'm tired of him. He makes it his business to find out all the horrible traits that people have, and then paint them into his pictures. He's painting me now. Everybody knows that I am a sweet, retiring, modest, religious, gentle old lady, and to look at my portrait you would say I was a sort of female Machiavelli! No! I am through with Berkman! But on with Kelly! Sir Tom, are you enough of an opportunist to come for a ride with me. You are so clever and young and fresh-looking that, unless I get you first, one of these designing young women will grab you and take you away."

The duchess arose and the crowd broke up. It was evident to Tom that he was expected to surrender himself to Mrs. Jones—whether he wanted to do so or not. He had planned to ask Pauline to go canoeing with him, but he dared not antagonize this powerful old lady. Therefore, with the best grace that he could, he helped her into her victoria, and they started off.

They were no sooner on the way than her brusque autocratic manner gave place to one of kindness. It was clear that she really liked young people—particularly young men—and wanted to be nice to him. Tom was pleased and flattered at such attention from an older woman, particularly one of such distinction. Presently he was telling her

all about his first years at college, his eventual success due to the fortuitous discovery of the "egg," and his present social and athletic ambitions. After an hour's run she dropped him at the Scotts, having first extracted from him a promise to lunch with her the following day.

"What an extraordinary old girl!" he remarked to Allyn as they with Parradym were smoking a last cigar together before going to bed that night. "She made herself most agreeable. I think she's taken quite a fancy to me."

Allyn nodded grimly.

"Yes," he said, "she has a way of gobbling people up like that—swallowing them whole. She likes you, yes. I don't wish to derogate from the impression you may have created on her susceptible old heart. But she's fickle—always was. She's been married three times! Divorced the other two, and poor old Jones died—couldn't stand the pace, I guess. Rich as mud. Entertains all the time, you know—swellest kind of parties—all the royalties. Hence her title—'duchess.'

"She may be fickle, but she's a good old soul, all the same. You said so yourself to-day after lunch. I like her," answered Tom stoutly.

"We all *like* her!" agreed Parradym. "You can't help liking a woman of her energy, executive ability, and superficial good nature. Of cou she's arrogant and dictatorial, but somebody's g to rule the roost, and she's got the time and t money. She might as well as anybody else. (don't let her turn your head."

"How do you mean?" asked Tom in a superior fashion.

She'd given it to old Parradym rather hard that afternoon. No wonder he felt sore.

"Well," answered Parradym. "Of course you've made a hit with her. But you're not the first—nor will you be the last. She wants something of you, and when she's had it she'll—throw you over, chuck you out, just as she has the others."

"Don't you think her capable of an unselfish friendship?" demanded Tom.

"Capable of it, perhaps," retorted Parradym, "but unless it is love at first sight, which you'll admit isn't probable, it's hardly likely that her platonic regard is entirely altruistic. I'm a fairly old man. I've seen a whole lot of this sort of thing, and I tell you these old women are after something."

"Well, what is it, then?" snapped Tom.

"Your youth!" replied Parradym with sudden bitterness. "They'll hang on to you, and sap your vitality just as a weasel sucks an egg. It isn't only the young women, like the one in the picture that goes with Kipling's poem, but the old ones as well that are the vampires. These withered old crones want young people that are fresh and vigorous about them. They want their blood, and they'll pay any price to get it."

"By George!" cried Tom indignantly, but more on his own account than on that of the duchess. "I really don't think you ought to speak about people in such a way. It's—it's almost—disgusting!"

"Of course it is, my dear fellow," agreed Parry. "But lots of life is disgusting. Forewarned is forearmed."

"Well, I don't believe it!" growled Tom. "You fellows don't see any good in anybody!—I'm going to bed!"

Yet in spite of his note of defiance he dreamed that night that he was lying bound upon a couch half-covered by a sheet, and that old Mrs. Rutherford Jones sat cross-legged somewhere above and sucked his blood through a pair of lorgnettes, while she gibbered:

"Even as you and I! Even as you and I!"

XXI

For some reason which Tom could not fully understand the two weeks allotted by him for the purpose of getting into physical trim for the tennis tournament were not productive of the expected results. He practised daily on various private courts or on the grounds of the Casino, studiously avoided alcohol and tobacco, and endeavored so far as possible to be in bed by eleven o'clock. But in spite of his efforts some influence which he was unable to define had affected the accuracy of his vision and the certainty of his stroke. While he felt in perfect physical health, the "pink of condition" in fact, his sleep was fitful and his appetite did not respond to the menu of elaborate simplicity which Mrs. Scott had ordered her chef to prepare for him.

There was something in the air—what, he could not make out—which deprived his play of its snap and brilliance of the year before. The expostulations of Allyn and the milder protests of Parradym had made him self-conscious, and whereas theretofore he had not thought at all about where he should hit the ball, he now kept wondering whether he was hitting it in the right place. He could serve the "egg," but he could not serve it with the same

accuracy, and the fact that he perceived other players lounging on the benches and about the grounds studying his service made him nervous.

One lank youth with yellow hair from Leland Stanford had been pointed out to him as a coming "Western Wonder," and more than once he had caught the fellow at a distance watching his delivery and apparently taking note of the effect of each cut upon the service. Beyond the fact that the name of the unknown was Calkins, Tom knew nothing of him; but he conceived a pronounced distaste for his tousled yellow "mop," his bobtailed blue coat, and his extremely high-water duck trousers. For some peculiar reason Calkins made Tom think of his own earlier self. He had worn just such a bobtailed coat and just such trousers. Now he rode to the Casino in the Scott brougham, and was assisted out by the Scott footman, who handed him his silver-mounted racket-cases as if he were serving royalty, and indeed Tom, clad in his immaculate white polo-coat, his carefully pressed flannels, and his silk shirt with its open rolling collar, and its full sleeves buttoned tight around his wrists, looked not unlike a young nobleman just up from Oxford at an English house-party.

As the day for the drawing drew nearer, Tom became more and more anxious about himself. He didn't seem acclimated to the air of Newport. He was in a constant state of excitement, physical and mental. Yet outwardly he gave no indication of his condition, and his friends continued to ac

claim him vociferously as the coming champion, or at least the "runner-up," and professed that he would walk triumphantly through the preliminaries to the semifinals. Tom himself felt strange misgivings. He knew that the virtue had gone out of him somehow. Something told him that through the "egg" alone could he hope to win. Yet, after all, he knew in his heart that the "egg" was nothing but a trick. He had made a practice of getting up for an early morning walk, in which Parradym frequently joined him, and on several occasions, out by the golf-links, they had passed Calkins jogging along without his coat on a three or four mile sprint, warming himself up for the day's work.

"There's a fellow that means business," said Parradym. "They tell me he has had to work his way through college by tutoring in the summer."

"He looks like a 'ruffled grouse,'" growled Tom. "I guess he's a close student of the game, though. Hope I don't draw him in the preliminaries!"

Tom did not draw Calkins in the preliminary round, but found himself pitted against mediocre players who had entered the tournament more for the fun of the thing than for anything else, and these he defeated generally without evoking the genie hidden in his marvellous "egg" serve. Once, however, when severely pushed by an old war-horse at the game, he was forced to use it and easily won a final love set. His victory was greeted with enthusiastic applause from the spectators, but it was marred for Tom by the sight of Calkins loafing

in a soiled cap at the far end of the benches, a point of excellent vantage for watching either the delivery of a service or its return.

He won his first four matches, had an accession of confidence, regained something of his old snap, and then found that he was to play against Calkins in the fourth series before the semifinals. In some inexplicable way it had become generally known, although none had seen Calkins play, that Tom was likely to meet a worthy antagonist in the Californian, and on the morning of their match Tom found a large gallery assembled at the Casino. The Scotts and Welfleets were all there, as well as the Selbys, and most of his college friends were gathered in the front row. Pauline and Lulie both threw him glances of encouragement as he tossed away his polo-coat, and shook hands with the awkward boy in the high-water trousers.

Calkins won the toss, and took the serve and the first game by a terrific smashing service ending in a long low shoot, the force of which almost knocked Tom's racket from his hand. Tom, holding the "egg" in reserve, tried a similar serve on the Leland Stanford man, and a hot battle ensued, both fighting for possession of the net, from which Tom was finally driven through the apparently miraculous ability of his opponent to lob. The games now stood two-love in favor of the Westerner. Again Tom lost. Three-love!

By this time the crowds were deserting the other matches to see the two college champions pl

against each other. Tom knew that the time had come, if it ever was coming, for him to disclose the famous service which his friends fondly believed would make him the national champion.

Stepping swiftly up to the back of the line he tossed the ball in the air, and cut it sharply with a terrific left-hand stroke. The ball whirred over the net, struck, as he had intended, in the right-hand corner of the service court, and bounded sharply, almost at a right angle, to the left, while Calkins waved at it vainly on the right. A titter went up from the audience which broke into a laugh as Calkins made a humorous grimace in the direction of the retreating ball.

But at Tom's second service, instead of withdrawing behind the back line, Calkins took his stand bravely in the centre of the court. Again Tom tossed the ball in the air, again sent it whining with the tremendous impact imparted to it toward the other corner of the court. This time likewise it bounded in a direction contrary to its course, but it had no sooner struck earth than the Californian sprang upon it with a leap, caught it squarely in the centre of his racket, and returned it with a terrific cross court which Tom all but failed to get. His ball rose high, sailing straight for the centre of the net where Calkins was waiting to smash it, ten feet over Tom's frantic swing.

"He's got it," thought Tom desperately. "He's been studying it all the time."

During the remainder of Tom's Waterloo the

"egg" offered no obvious difficulties to the Westerner. In fact, Tom's straight cannon-ball service won him more games than the now discredited "egg." This Californian farmer began to fill Tom with terror. He seemed to have muscles of iron and lungs of leather, for he didn't turn a hair at the tremendous pace Tom set for him, while the Harvard champion found himself reeking and panting at the end of every rally.

By an almost superhuman effort Tom won the third set, practically collapsed at the fourth, and lost the match to his opponent, having taken but nine games out of twenty-four!

He made an heroic effort, befitting a good sportsman, to be cheerful and good-natured over this heart-breaking result, and vaulted gracefully, if not gayly, over the net to grasp the calloused hand of the "Ruffled Grouse." He felt very picturesque and very magnanimous as he did this, and he tried to make a little speech to Calkins which should epitomize the sensational aspect of the occasion.

"Old man," he cried grandiloquently, "I don't grudge you this victory; you deserve it! But I hardly expected to be put out so soon. You're a wonder!"

Strangely enough the Californian did not seem to think that the occasion was one of any particular moment, nor that the victory was at all surprising.

"Thanks," he said shortly, putting on a faded bath-robe. "That's all right. I expect you're bit out of condition. That 'egg' is rather ne .

But on the whole I prefer an old-fashioned smash. So long."

Thus ended the brief and sensational sporting career of Thomas Kelly, Esquire, erstwhile of Newbury Street, Boston. But it had served its purpose. Through it he had stepped into his own, into the world of wealth and fashion, into a future of untold possibilities.

XXII

MY DEAR MR. KELLY:

It will give me the sincerest pleasure if you will make one of my house-party after your visit to Mrs. Scott is over. I do not know how long you are planning to remain in Newport, but I should be delighted to have you regard my house as your home for whatever length of time you care to stay. Berkman is leaving to-morrow and his room is at your disposal. Do come!

Cordially yours,
ANNA RUTHERFORD JONES.

Thus ran the note which the blue footman handed to Tom on a silver salver upon his return to "Beausejour." Had he received it in June he would have been instantly filled with ecstatic excitement at such a pressing invitation from one of the "leaders"—if not the "leader"—of Newport society. As it was, he merely thrust it into his pocket and lit a cigarette.

So the old girl was making up to him! It would probably be beastly dull staying with her, and yet it offered an opportune excuse to escape from the somewhat chilly hospitality of Mrs. Scott. There were other reasons, too, for going. For one, there were disadvantages about being in the same house with Lulie. You couldn't be at high pressure all the time. You might burst your boiler. For another,

he had already stayed at "Beausejour" a full month and felt that he had outworn his welcome. Besides, he owed Allyn seven hundred dollars which he had no immediate prospect of being able to repay, and it was embarrassing to be constantly reminded of the unpleasant fact by the presence of his friend. Last, there were new people to be met at Mrs. Jones's, new débutantes to fascinate, new millionaires to "cotton to," in short, new fields to conquer by virtue of the sword of his social charm. So he remarked casually to Allyn that evening:

"You've been awfully good to put me up here for so long, and I've had a perfectly ripping time. Now that my match is over I've really no excuse for hanging on, but old lady Jones has asked me over to stay with her awhile, and she's been so decent to me I rather feel as if I ought to go."

"Sorry to have you leave us," answered Allyn rather coldly. "But you'll no doubt enjoy yourself there for a while. Anyhow you can stay until the finals. When does she want you?"

"To-morrow," replied Tom, a little jarred by his friend's tone.

They were standing at the door of the royal suite on the point of going to bed, with the valet loitering unobtrusively in the offing. Tom wondered if Allyn knew anything about Lulie. It was quite unlikely. But it would be a relief to get out of the house. The valet could pack his things the first thing in the morning. The valet! It came to him suddenly that the man would have a right to expect

a handsome gratuity for waiting upon him for a month—twenty-five dollars at least! And there would be the butler, and the three footmen that were always on duty in the hall and dining-room, and the two chambermaids, and—horrors!—the four different drivers that had taken him about, and the steward on the yacht, and the quartermaster on the launch, the man that carried the trunks, and maybe the housekeeper. It would make a hundred dollar bill "look sick!" He almost turned faint and poured himself a Scotch-and-soda. Then he took the bull by the horns.

"Damn it all, Allyn!" he remarked, as if the thought had just occurred to him. "I find I've run short again! Can you lend me another hundred?"

Allyn smiled.

"I think so," he said, not unkindly. "Eight hundred now, isn't it? He stepped inside the threshold and closed the door behind him. "Look here, old man. You don't mind my speaking, do you? You're really hitting up too hot a pace! You see, you're my guest and all that, and I feel it's partly my—all our—fault. But you simply mustn't go on this way. Don't think I'm afraid I'll lose my money. You know it isn't that. I shan't think of it again. It's you I'm worried about. You may think it funny coming from me! But you make us all look like pikers. You'll kill yourself!"

"I don't know what you mean, at all!" answered Tom, taken utterly by surprise.

Allyn decanted a glass of whiskey and threw himself back in a leather chair——

"Don't be sore on me," he continued. "You're different from us—or at least you *were*. That's the point, and I feel responsible. You'd hit the bottle a little in Cambridge, but when you landed in Newport you were pretty much all to the good —sound in wind and limb—a clean-minded, jolly, simple old Boston son of a gun. Now look at you! All out of condition. Panting and wallowing like a walrus all over the court in a national tournament. Throwing around money like water. Dangling after a lot of little girls and letting them flatter you. Sucking up as much rum as I do—and more. Smoking yourself to death. And finally, getting pie-eyed, you get a strangle-hold upon my esteemed married sister and kiss her right in front of her hubby. Really, you know, the thing isn't done—except in novels, maybe!"

He laughed with a flat attempt at gayety, obviously trying to make things as easy as possible for his friend. But his words made Tom writhe.

"I'm sorry you feel that way about me!" he stammered. He knew Allyn meant it in all kindness, and yet he could not bring himself to take such a dressing down in good part. Allyn had done nothing less than insult him. He took a few turns up and down the room to get his bearings.

"Don't be angry with me, old top!" Allyn hurried on. "You see it's only because we're so fond of you that it makes any difference. Now there's Parry——!"

"Oh, *he's* been talking about me too, has he?" snapped Tom.

"Oh, no! Parry's one of your best friends——"

"The hell he is! Look here, Allyn. You may mean well enough, but it strikes me you're going a bit too far. If that's the way you feel, the sooner I leave the better."

His egotism had overcome his humiliation, and he spoke now with lowered lids and a curl on his lips.

Allyn arose. He could not insult a guest, even if the guest had abused his hospitality.

"Look here, Tom!" he said earnestly. "Don't be sore! Of course, I took a chance in speaking; but I was honestly worried about you. I'm sorry if I've hurt your feelings. But, you see, I was only doing it for your own good. I may be wrong, at that! Let's be friends, anyhow! Give us your paw, old bear!"

He held out his hand and Tom, who recognized that he deserved every word that Allyn had uttered, and more, and that his pose of righteous indignation was absurd, took it in his.

"That's all right, Allyn!" he said gruffly.

"That's a good Kelly!" answered Allyn heartily.

It was—or should have been—the cue to a real reconciliation—to a frank confession and apology on Tom's part—to a new endeavor, more tactful perhaps, on that of his friend to put him right. A blur came over Tom's eyes. He knew he *was* a swine! Knew that it was all true! And Allyn was a good

sort to tell him! His heart warmed to his friend, he wanted to throw his arm around his shoulder and beg his pardon, to make it all up and admit what a nincompoop he was! For Tom, in the inner recesses of his soul, preserved an invisible set of spiritual weights and measures which he sometimes used unconsciously. He recognized perfectly well that he was a swine, but he excused himself on the ground that he was living in the same pen and feeding out of the same trough with like animals. As long as he was doing so, his swinishness did not seem to him to carry with it the same moral obliquity. He was in Rome and doing as the Romans did, that was all. And now as he looked into Allyn's kindly eyes his better nature gained the ascendant. His lip trembled and he was on the point of bursting out into a full confession of his swinishness, and an appeal to Allyn to help him turn his back upon it.

Allyn, holding Tom's right hand in his, unconsciously thrust his left into his trousers pocket. It came in contact with a roll of crisp bills. Allyn was only aware that Tom had "come around," and was no longer angry with him. He had no intimation of the depths to which his friend's nature had been stirred—how near Tom really was to an emotional crisis which might have had a revolutionary result upon his character and future. Allyn's fingers closed on the bills, and he instinctively drew them forth at the very instant that Tom was about to lay bare his soul.

"Well, here's that hundred!" he remarked jocosely. "Are you sure that's all you want?"

The sight and crackle of the bills with the words that accompanied them strangled Tom's change of heart in the very moment of its birth, choked it like a hod of ashes poured over a tender hapless sprout. Instantly he hardened. Withdrawing his hand almost roughly from Allyn's, he stepped back scowling:

"Curse your money!" he cried fiercely. "I won't touch a cent of the damned stuff!"

But in the next instant he realized that he must.

XXIII

It would be fruitless to dwell in detail upon Tom's visit to Mrs. Jones. The summer life in the various mansions along the Ocean Walk and Rhode Island Avenue differs but little, and his days were passed in the same round of frivolous activities as before, save that he found that his new hostess regarded herself as having, in exchange for her hospitality, the first claim upon his time. While at the Scotts' he had been free to come and go exactly as he chose, with no questions asked, but at Mrs. Jones's he was expected to lunch and dine with his hostess whenever she remained at home and to spend many hours, when he would have preferred to be on the water or at the Casino, in entertaining her at whist and *piquet*.

Soon he found himself assisting as a matter of course in arranging the guests at her constant dinner and luncheon parties, and acting as unsalaried majordomo of her establishment. Just how this had come about he was unable to explain. He had at first felt flattered at the confidence reposed in him, but when this extended to his being held personally responsible for the happiness of all the more unattractive female guests he was inclined to rebel. Yet, had he rebelled he would

have had no place to go. Mrs. Jones was more than kind; but she also expected him to be more than kind, even if he was less than kin. He could at any moment have cast himself upon the Selbys and been received with open arms, but this would have embarrassed him. If he was going to live on Pa Selby for the rest of his life he didn't want to begin just now. He'd take his off time first. Besides it would have complicated his affair with Lulie. So he stayed on, occupying a position in the house rather like that of an eldest son who has just returned home after a prolonged absence. Parradym, when they met, eyed him with sinister humor. It was plain that the aged sycophant regarded him as already having descended to a lower level.

Whether it was due to Parradym's attitude or to the increasing exactions of his hostess, Tom's visit at Mrs. Jones's rapidly began to pall upon him. He had now enjoyed her hospitality for nearly a month, the social season was slightly on the wane, and as her engagements decreased in number Mrs. Jones availed herself more and more of Tom's society. Before the end of the first week in September he found that she expected him to spend most of his time with her. She had become, as she frequently told him, increasingly fond of him. But as often happens, her fondness carried with it an informality of treatment which, while at times verging on the sentimental was at others peremptorily exacting and almost contemptuous. There were many

occasions when she could not have been more gracious or even tender, but this did not preclude her from ordering him about like a servant when she felt so disposed.

Altogether Tom felt that he had earned his passage during the month he had stayed with her, and he might have departed sooner than he did had he not discovered that a show of meekness only led to greater indignities, and that a display of indignation upon the whole rather pleased her than otherwise. Thus their relations presently came to resemble those of a mismatched couple who indulged in frequent quarrels invariably followed by periods of reconciliation. During these Mrs. Jones was accustomed to assert that she was a lonely old woman, that nobody loved her, that she looked upon Tom almost as a son, and that if he ever left her it would break her heart. As often, however, she would charge him with selfishness and neglect, and upbraid him for leaving her alone to amuse herself.

Tom's self-respect suffered severely during this humiliating period, but as he wished to remain in Newport until his cruise with the Selbys he had no choice but to stay where he was. He soon discovered, however, that Allyn's opinion of his hostess was sounder than the one which he had himself originally expressed. It might well be that the old girl was not a human vampire, but he was now frank to admit that there was something unwholesome about her—just what, he could not define. For

one thing she had a way of making him come and sit down upon a stool at her side and patting his cheek with her bony old hand. On these occasions she frequently gave him what she called "good advice" as to his policy and conduct of life. It may have been that she had an unselfish affection for this young man, as she had had for other young men before him; or it may have been and probably was the fact that her interest in him was too complex for analysis. Whatever its precise character it was unfortunate that at this point in Tom's nascent career an older woman should have not only flattered him with her attention but should have sought, sincerely or otherwise, to persuade him that life was a game of chance played on a crooked wheel.

"Come here, Tommy!" she ordered one evening.

All the guests had gone and his aged hostess was sitting before her own picture, smoking a cigarette before going to her room.

"Come here and let me talk to you."

Tom obediently took his place by her side, and she laid her hand affectionately on his.

"Don't let that artist fellow Berkman give you any of his queer ideas, Tommy! He's a perfect magpie! None of the things he says are his own. And he shouts so! That's why I got rid of him. Do you suppose I'd ever have accepted my portrait in an unfinished condition if I could have stood him a moment longer? Never! I suppose he talked you deaf, dumb, and blind, didn't he?"

Tom laughed uneasily——

"He certainly likes to talk," he parried.

"Talk! That's all he can do. What does an ugly little brat like that know about life? He can daub paint on a canvas—yes! But all his life-long he'll get nothing that he doesn't have to fight for!"

"Perhaps you mean 'that he doesn't have to pay for,'" hazarded Tom.

"Put it your own way," she retorted sharply. "Which do you value most, what you buy for dirty money or what is given freely? Is a woman's love you can buy with money worth having? The world is full of two kinds of people, Tom; those who have charm and those who have not. It belongs to the first. They are the overlords of life, and the others pay tribute to them like peasants. They ask for what they want and they get it. Berkman is a peasant."

She looked keenly at Tom.

"But you're one of the others, Tom!" she said: "You can have what you want for the asking. And it's something to be proud of, not ashamed of! Youth! It's the gift of the gods!"

She bit her lips and gripped the arm of the chair with her unoccupied hand.

"My God! What wouldn't I give to be young!" she groaned suddenly, so that he was startled. "Don't mind me, Tommy! I'm just a foolish old woman, who sees life slipping away from her before she's ready to go, and wants a few hundred years

more of it. Take all you can get, Tom. Women like you, and women run the game. Don't make any mistake about that. Anything you want a woman can get for you. And don't be afraid to ask her, either. She'll be more than ready to give it to you. For you've got the greatest thing in all the world—youth—immortal youth!"

Tom was acutely embarrassed and at the same time hugely flattered. But he realized the tragic note in what his hostess was saying. Not knowing what to reply, he lit a cigarette in a self-conscious manner and blew smoke rings, waiting until she should resume.

"You wonder why I say these things to you? It's only because I'm fond of you—really devoted to you, and I want to see you make a success. Don't go off and marry the first foolish little chit that makes eyes at you. Don't get tied up with some married woman or any woman that hasn't any future or position. Wait! You've plenty of time. Heavens, you're only twenty! Have your fling—see the world—sow your wild oats if you want to —only ask me about it, first. But don't be in a hurry! Then when the right girl comes along—why, take her! And any girl would have you —believe me! I'm a wise old woman and I know!"

"Thanks!" laughed Tom. "You're highly flattering. And I intend to follow your advice. But wouldn't I be buying the lady, just the same as any other?"

Mrs. Jones smiled a wrinkled smile and shook her finger at him indulgently.

"You clever child! Well, perhaps you would. But at any rate you would be getting a better bargain."

XXIV

THE announcement of Tom's contemplated cruise upon the *Pauline* brought a renewed outburst from Mrs. Jones. It was, she asserted, an absurd waste of his time and a dangerous interruption in his so far highly successful career. Mrs. Jones had—or claimed to have—"plans" for Tom—what they were she did not disclose—which would be vitally disarranged by his abrupt departure at this time. To go sailing off alone with a young girl on a yacht—even if her father and mother were along—would in a sense compromise him. He would be regarded as having had the bloom rubbed off, so to speak. Moreover, she expected shortly to return to her "spring-and-autumn place" at Roslyn, Long Island, and she wanted him to assist her in the onerous task of transferring her household thither. Tom, suspecting that this was the "plan" to which she referred, resolutely declined to be diverted, explaining that he was under a binding obligation to make the trip and that, anyhow, he had no interest in the girl.

Wise old Mrs. Jones, however, merely laughed at him. He was going, she protested, for no other purpose than to marry the first million dollars' worth of pickle-jars who proposed to him. The

whole thing was nothing but a scheme, on the part of the Selbys, to get him where he would be helpless and then bind him hand and foot. These yachting trips were inevitably the *débâcle* in promising young lives. At last, perceiving him to be inexorable, she yielded rather more gracefully than might have been expected and, having extorted a promise from him to join her in the country immediately upon his return, bade him a sinister farewell.

Lulie presented greater difficulty. Ever since her husband's sudden disappearance from "Beausejour" she had evinced an interest in Tom which, while delightful at times, was at others extremely disconcerting. Coincidently there seemed to be something mysterious going on in her private affairs—just what he was unable to surmise. She was as alluring as ever, more alluring now that she was no longer merely a vision—but there was less frivolity in her attitude toward him. This worried Tom, rather. It was quite true that he had kissed her in the moonlight and had told her that he loved her, as he had others. But he had no idea of committing himself to a wedding march, ever so problematical, with her or of leading her to believe that he had. Simply because you took a married woman in your arms and swore you adored her was no reason—certainly not!—for thinking that you were prepared to face the ignominy of a divorce court and a future without alimony.

Somehow Lulie had in some indefinable way man-

aged to create an atmosphere of finality about their relations that somewhat frightened him. Why, dozens of men must have done the same thing to her before without getting into any such muddle. He almost wished that he could confide in old Mother Jones, but he instinctively realized that if he did it would be good-by to Lulie! The old dragon would eat her alive! On the other hand, it looked as if Lulie might eat *him* alive! But then poor Tom was almost ready to be eaten alive. One day he would be thirsty for her presence, and the very next he would be gasping at the dilemma in which the service upon him of a legal document naming him as a corespondent would place him. Was he willing to have Lulie and her three millions at such a price? Any suggestion that he proposed to go sailing off all over the Maine coast with Pauline Selby would have brought about a crisis which he had no courage to face. He wasn't ready to marry Lulie in spite of his passion for her. In fine he shrewdly suspected that the fact that he could not possibly marry her had been one of the elements in her original attraction for him. One didn't marry Cleopatra or Semiramis—or Mrs. Potiphar!

So he carefully concealed his traitorous intention, trusting to chance to make it possible for him to find a plausible excuse for his desertion at the appropriate time. As luck would have it, Lulie received a sudden summons by telegraph from New York—from her lawyer, she explained with dark suggestiveness—the day before the departure of the *Pauline*, and he saw

her enter the Pullman car at the junction, and bade her farewell through the open window feeling like a schoolboy who kisses his mother good-by just before playing hookey.

The elder Selbys greeted Tom effusively. There was that in their manner which indicated that his appearance on board the yacht was tantamount to putting the final seals on a prenuptial agreement. Pauline, herself, displayed a new and unwonted—in fact almost maidenly—shyness and reserve. Also to Tom's astonishment he discovered a totally unexpected passenger in the person of Parradym.

The cruise started auspiciously after a dinner eaten while the yacht was still at her moorings in Newport Harbor, for the captain had wisely decided to make his first essay of the broad rollers of the Atlantic while the family were safely in their berths and to get as many as possible of the four hundred sea miles to Mt. Desert behind the *Pauline's* propeller before it should be necessary for them to get up again.

Tom had received another letter from his mother just before his departure, but he had thrust it into his pocket in the vague apprehension that it might contain something which would interfere with his embarkation. Once the *Pauline* had weighed anchor, and it was no longer possible for him to return, he opened it in the privacy of his stateroom. As he expected, his mother had returned to Boston and

longed to see him again. She had read, she said, of his defeat in the tournament, but she appreciated the fact that he was probably too much disappointed by the result to write to her about it. There was nothing now, however, to keep him longer in Newport, and she hoped that he would return at once in time to enter the law school. She was anxious that he should do this and become a lawyer, like his father. Everybody said he was so "bright" that she was sure he could easily become a great man if he only tried—like Rufus Choate, perhaps. She still continued to "do rather poorly" as she expressed it, but she hoped that the quiet of Newbury Street and Bridget's good old-fashioned cooking would soon make her feel like herself again. The only hint of uneasiness in the letter was contained in the concluding sentence:

"My dear, dear boy," she wrote in a hand more shaky, Tom noticed, than in her preceding letter. "I hope the pleasures of athletics and social life have not taken your mind off higher things or your duty toward Him to whom we owe everything. Oh, my dear son! My constant prayer is that you will bear yourself worthily as a follower of Jesus Christ.

"Your devoted mother,

"CAROLINE M. KELLY."

Tom, who was sitting upon a wicker divan with his feet on the bed when he read the letter, ground the end of the cigar which he was smoking between his teeth. Why did his mother invariably write that kind of tosh? It was embarrassing merely

to read it! He made a face, not so much at the sentiments contained in her epistle, as at what he regarded as the indelicacy of forever talking and writing about that kind of thing. Anyhow it was a relief to know that he would not have to ask Selby to turn back to Newport or put in at Boston. His mother was all right. That cough of hers which had been familiar to him for twenty years—was half—if not all—nervousness. She'd do well enough once she had Bridget to look after her. He crunched the letter into his coat pocket, intending to throw it overboard, and filled his gold cigarette-case from a gilded glass box upon the table by the port-hole. It was a swell room, all right! The chintz was really bully! He did not know, of course, that Pauline had selected it herself, and had had the stateroom expensively decorated for his coming.

He threw on his polo-coat, to get which had been the ostensible reason for going to his stateroom, and mounted the companionway to the deck, where he found the whole party having coffee under the awning, and watching the lights of Newport fast dimming behind them.

"Well," nodded Ma Selby, "here we are at last. We ought to have a real good time for the next two weeks."

"Th' comp'ny's all right, anyhow!" agreed her husband. "Just what I like, one or two congenial people so's not to be lonely, and not enough to have to make any effort."

"That's what I like, too," echoed his wife. "Not

havin' to make an effort! I do get tired at Newport with all this going out to dinner—not but what I like it, too!" she added, for fear that Tom might infer that she was by nature unadapted to the higher life.

"You heard what the cabby said to Captain Granger the other day?" remarked Parradym affably, saving the conversation from plunging into the depths of personal reminiscence. "Granger, you know, is an Englishman, and picked up a cab just to see the town. 'What do all these people do to amuse themselves?' he inquired of the driver. 'Feed off one another, mostly,' said the cabby."

Pa Selby slapped his knee. "That's a good one! That's just how I feel about it! 'Feed off one another!' Ha! Ha! That's what *I* always say! What's the use of feeding off *one another* when you can feed *at home?*" he inquired.

"Exactly!" answered Parradym, winking imperceptibly at Tom.

The *Pauline* slipped swiftly down Narragansett Bay, and soon a slight lift of the bows foretold their approach to deep water.

"Well, I'm going to turn in!" speedily declared Mrs. Selby, addressing her husband. "You better come too, papa. You ain't used to the ocean. The young folks can stay up as long as they want to!"

"Good night, everybody!" at once said Mr. Selby obediently. "You may not see us again very soon. But the captain says we ought to be

Bar Harbor to-morrow afternoon. Anyhow, if you don't see what you want, *ring* for it!"

The two old people with much effort negotiated the upper steps of the slippery companionway, and presently disappeared.

"Does anybody want to walk up and down a little?" inquired Pauline innocently.

"*Anybody* does," answered Parradym with a smile. "But *I* prefer to sit here and smoke. You two young things can go and amuse yourselves. I won't look."

The yacht was meeting the combers head on, her bow sending upward great showers of moonlit spray. Tom slipped Pauline's hand through his arm, and led her to where they could stand in the shelter of the bridge and watch the great undulating waste of the silvered ocean.

The girl was, contrary to her usual habit, strangely silent, and Tom, finding it difficult to think of anything appropriate to say, stood there speechless beside her. Pauline did not look at him; indeed, she did not seem to be looking anywhere, and he could without difficulty divine that she was deeply moved by something. He realized distinctly that it was "his move." She had worked herself up to a supreme emotional crisis, planned the whole thing to give him this opportunity the very first night out so that they could have the full benefit of the entire voyage as acknowledged lovers. Old Parradym had been brought along to amuse the others—even if he were not a party to the plot, and the almanac

consulted in advance as to the weather and the moon.

Yet Tom felt no responding thrill. Not one beat faster did his callous young heart register as Pauline moved a shade closer to him, and tightened almost unnoticeably the clasp of her hand upon his arm. But he had to say something! And he did feel something like pity for this fresh, young creature who was so obviously eating her heart out for him. After all she was his friend, his playmate—almost an intimate. It was hard to feel that he was the cause of making her suffer. That she *was* suffering was obvious. She had tuned herself up to this great moment and her nerves were tense—ready to snap on the one hand or to burst into a joyous ecstatic love-song upon the other. And all for him! Why? he asked himself. He had never said anything to her. He had never given her any real encouragement. Compared with his conduct regarding Lulie, he had acted toward her like a human icicle. It was rather nice, though, to have a girl, particularly such a stunner as Pauline, all fussed up over one! Why, hang it, the child was actually head over ears in love with him! She really was a dear! He wanted to put his arm around her and draw her tightly to him and tell her how very, very nice he thought she was; but something warned him not to do it. It was not entirely the recollection of Ma Selby either, although her gestures and figure were vividly present in his mind.

Pauline was at times appallingly like her. These athletic girls were apt to put on weight if they stopped exercising even for a moment. He could never stand a *fat* Pauline! Moreover, the remarks of old lady Jones had given him something to think about. He had been a fool even to consider Pauline seriously. Imagine having Pa Selby for a father-in-law! There were plenty of good little fish in the sea—"goldfish"—eager for the fly. It was lucky he'd not gone on with her as he had with Lulie—! If he had, well he'd have had to make good, of course. But he had not and the situation was all due to Pauline's own impetuous insistence on getting what she wanted when she wanted it. Apparently he was not to be consulted in the matter at all. Pauline had always bought what pleased her, and now she proposed to buy him; at least, that was the way it looked. No! No! It would take more millions than belonged to the Selbys to make him surrender youth, freedom, Lulie, and the possibility of a brilliant—a "great" marriage. Some woman had used the term, and it had stuck in his mind. If he married at all that was what he would make—a "great" marriage. But meanwhile Pauline was waiting for him to speak.

Gently he moved slightly away from her.

"What—er—what a lovely night!" he said awkwardly.

Pauline did not reply. She had lowered her head so that her face was in shadow. He felt the imperceptible pressure of her body against his, and

that she was trembling. Poor Pauline! After her calm assumption that she could do as she liked it was tough luck for her. He also experienced a certain contrition for having been the cause of what he knew would be a deep humiliation, but with due regard for his own safety it was obvious that he could do nothing to make the situation easier for her. In fact, he told himself the more of a brute he was the better, for no explanation that he could give in the nature of a confession or expression of regret could help him. Anything he might say would only hurt her pride the more. He must remain in her eyes what he knew himself to be—or at least to have been—in fact, a cad. Involuntarily he uttered a smothered expression of impatience at his predicament. She started and half turned to him. Swiftly disengaging his arm from hers, he said gruffly:

"Pretty cold out here, don't you think? Perhaps we'd better go in."

Then it was that the taut strings of Pauline's heart snapped. With a sort of sob she quickly turned and half ran toward the companionway. Tom started to follow her and then stopped. After all, it was better to have the whole thing end just that way—to get it over once and for all! He went back to where they had been standing and stood watching the moon for some time. Then he uttered a mild oath, and walked back to where Parradym was sitting.

XXV

THE philosopher's head was almost entirely concealed in the collar of his ulster, but a projecting pipe indicated that somewhere behind the collar there must be a face. Tom sank down rather gloomily beside him, and presently from the depths of the ulster, like the voice of an oracle behind the altar, a muffled voice remarked:

"Well, young 'un! Have you given hostages to fortune?"

"No," replied Tom. "I am still white, twenty-one—and free! I had a close squeak, though. 'Alone at last,' and all that sort of thing. Curse you! I believe you're responsible for almost landing me in the net of matrimony."

"And you're *not* landed—or at least hooked?"

"No!"

Parradym arose abruptly and slapped Tom's knee.

"You surprise me! Come down-stairs—'below' I believe is the proper term, and have a nightcap. I want to talk to you. Congratulations, my son!"

They made their way to the smoking-room, where Parradym ordered a hot toddy.

"Cold up there!" he grumbled. "I supposed that after to-night you wouldn't need a chaperon."

Tom shook his head.

"We all need 'em, I guess!" he remarked. In fact he had begun to realize how close to the edges of various precipices he had been disporting himself He also recognized the indubitable fact that Parry's advice given him at the outset of his Newport career had been wise, even if he had not seen fit to follow it.

"Don't wait up!" said Parradym to the steward. "I'll switch off the light." Then he turned to Tom, his reddish face illuminated by a kindly smile.

"You haven't got tired of hothouse melons *already*, have you?"

Tom laughed good-naturedly.

"Not *tired* of them exactly. *Used* to them, perhaps. They don't seem quite so much of a treat as they did at first. But they still taste *good*."

"Any better than what you had in Cambridge——?"

Tom pondered this astonishing question. The food at Memorial had in fact been appalling—tough, gristly steak, spotty potatoes, heavy bread, but he had devoured it with a relish which was now totally absent.

"No!" answered Tom frankly. "Of course, they *are* better, only they don't taste so. You were right, and so was old Billy Shakespeare when he got off that bit about satiety dulling the edge of appetite, or whatever it was."

"I didn't claim any originality," replied Parry. "I merely tried to impress upon you the truth of an ancient and quite familiar principle."

"But I didn't appreciate your good intentions. However, I do now. Marrying a couple of million dollars doesn't seem half so exciting now as it did six weeks ago."

"That's what I want to talk to you about."

Parry pulled his chair nearer.

"Of course, Shakespeare was right and was only repeating a truth as old as Adam, who no doubt ate more than one apple and got heartily sick of them before he was driven out by the angel with the flaming sword. You knew it yourself, only you were loath to apply a familiar doctrine to a new set of circumstances. I was just the same way at your age. I was all for the peaches, the plums, and the melons. I was satisfied that if I could get them without effort I should be perfectly happy. Well, I found it easy enough to get them, but I soon found I didn't want them. For twenty years I've eaten nothing but the simplest kind of food. I'm speaking both literally and allegorically. We don't enjoy anything we don't have to work for, Tommy. I have to work hard at golf to get up an appetite even for a boiled egg and a chop."

"Horrible example!" exclaimed Tom, who was, nevertheless, keenly interested in Parradym's confession.

"Now what you say about marrying a couple of millions interests me a good deal," continued his friend. "I'm almost afraid you have learned your lesson too well. I hope you refer only to 'marrying millions.' If so, I hope you'll stand by

your guns. Only don't make the mistake of not marrying at all—if you honestly fall in love. Take warning from my sad case. When I found I could have my peaches and my melons for the asking, I began to wonder if there was any advantage in marrying anybody. I saw a lot of people who were wretchedly unhappy together, and even more wretched after they had dissolved their matrimonial ties. I discovered that marriage usually meant children, anxiety, sickness, and death. I 'took counsel of my fears.' Why fall in love and bring children into the world if by so doing I was going to expose myself to the arrows of outrageous fortune? My parents were both dead. Sorrow couldn't touch me. Why invite unhappiness? If I had no family I would have only myself to look out for, to worry about, and when I died nobody would suffer the agonies of bereavement on my account. So I shut myself up in my shell and built an iron wall around my affections to keep out sorrow."

Parradym's face had grown very sad.

"I was a fool, Tom! What wouldn't I give now to have had sorrow! Many's the time I've envied my friend with a dead child. Pain and joy go hand in hand. Deaden your capacity for one and you lose the other. To-day I'd rather have had a year or so with a woman I had loved,—and have lost her,—than to be what I am—a lonely, wifeless, childless old man!"

"But not friendless!" said Tom gently.

"Sometimes I think I am," returned Parradym. I *know* I am. You needn't protest. I impress most people just as I impressed *you* at our first meeting. Seriously, you can't imagine how lonely I am, or how the vacuousness of my life palls upon me. You see I've dried up with the monotony of it. And then there's the other side of it. We old fellows without any responsibilities or emotions haven't had the experiences which seem to give other men the capacity for religious belief. Theoretically, intellectually, and logically, too, I suppose—I'm just a selfish old materialist. I don't believe in either heaven or hell, or in rewards or punishments. There may be a God or there may not—for all I know. I've got no wish to live, and I've got no will to die. One day is just like another. Some fellow—Stephen Phillips, I think—has put it pretty well:

> "'O would there were a heaven to hear!
> O would there were a hell to fear!
> Ah, welcome fire, eternal fire,
> To burn forever and not tire!
>
> Better Ixion's whirling wheel,
> And still at any cost to feel!
> Dear Son of God, in mercy give
> My soul to flames, but—let me *live!*'"

Tom could think of nothing adequate to say in response. For the first time he saw the real Parradym. So he fidgeted with his glass, unable to

speak, while the bachelor gazed in a sort of dream at the big swinging lamp in the middle of the smoking-room ceiling. Unexpectedly he burst out laughing——

"Well, well!" he exclaimed jocularly, reaching for a match, "I really quite forgot where I was. It's not often I'm taken that way. But don't give up the idea of getting married, old top, *will* you?"

Parradym leaned forward and gazed deep into Tom's eyes.

"If you ever meet a girl you love—in the right way, I mean, go after her—through fire and water, if need be, and don't let up until you get her or you're dead. Only that way will you find happiness. Don't be scared off at the idea that marriage and childbirth mean work and worry and pain and death. Thank God for the chance to work and worry and suffer, and perhaps when you die you'll feel that life was worth living. I'm going to bed!"

He got up and held out his hand to Tom who took it, embarrassed at the seriousness and intensity of Parradym's outburst. He'd never suspected that Parry wasn't happy! He seemed so jovial and comfortable—always having a good time at other people's expense!

Tom sat smoking for a long time after Parradym had gone to his stateroom. He wondered if what the old boy said was really true. Queer idea about having to suffer in order to enjoy. He didn't quite swallow that! He yawned. No, he hadn

suffered at all and, by thunder, he'd enjoyed a whole lot. His thoughts reverted to Lulie as he turned off the light, and sought the cabin upon which Pauline had expended so much thought and attention in preparation for him.

The wind blew itself out during the night, and when Tom came on deck the yacht was running fast through a sunlit ocean off the Isles of Shoals. Pauline and her parents did not appear, and Tom breakfasted in company with Parradym, whose cheery, rubicund face gave no hint of its seriousness upon the preceding evening. They kept well out to sea, passed "The Rock" shortly after lunch, and at the same time made landfall of the hills of Mt. Desert, which, twenty miles away, slowly lifted their great backs above the waves like huge undulating sea-monsters. To the eastward the irregularly indented coast of Maine stretched away until it vanished into the autumn haze, to the west the horizon was spotted with purple islands, and before them, northward, ever loomed larger and larger the gray mountains that had guided the great Champlain, and the no less adventurous Du Guast to safe harbors among their fir-covered headlands. They were now directly in the lane of the coast trade between Halifax and New York, and passed many a lumber-laden schooner, her gunwhales almost awash, and occasionally a smart fisherman from Belfast or Camden.

Pauline made her appearance just in time for afternoon tea, and took Parradym's chaffing with

supreme good nature. It was obvious that she did not intend to permit the incident of the night before to affect her enjoyment of the rest of the voyage, and there was something in her manner which said to Tom as plainly as if she had spoken the very words: "I acted like a little fool last night! Let us be friends."

Tom, who felt not altogether blameless in the matter, made himself as agreeable as he could, and all three were having a merry time of it by the time the *Pauline* had turned her nose into Frenchman's Bay. Tom, accustomed as he was to both mountains and seashore, had never seen anything so beautiful as these precipitous hills mantled in their autumn coloring which seemed to rise directly from the shadowed waters of the bay to where, a thousand feet or more above, their barren summits broke the rays of the declining sun. The sea was a deep blue, striped here and there with opalescent shades deepening into purple. Green islands, almost yellow-green in the afternoon light, lay all about them, the channels between them picked out by the flashing sails of yachts. Deep fiords here and there divided the island, offering haven for fleets of war-ships. Small racing-boats manned by bronzed girls and boys raced across their bows. Swift launches darted about with all the arbitrariness of water insects; the air was at once fresh with the salt of the sea, and odoriferous with the pine-laden breath of the near-by forests. Ecstatically Pauline watched the white surf creaming over the red rocks along the shore

of the "Ocean Drive" and against "Schooner Head" as the yacht glided swiftly by, and when they entered the deep shadow cast by Newport Mountain, and could see high above them the sunlight blazing through the pines upon its ridge, and beyond the shadow the gleaming waters of the inner bay studded with small green islands, she demanded why she had never been informed that such a heavenly place existed upon earth, and declared that she would never live anywhere else.

Presently the yacht emerged from the shadow of the mountain into the sunlight, and rounding one of the "Porcupines" dropped anchor in the harbor. The stimulating air, his long sleep of the night before, and the restful day spent upon the deck of the *Pauline* gave Tom a sense of health and moral cleanliness such as he had not experienced for weeks. Moreover, he was keenly sensitive to the exquisite beauty of their surroundings, which, together with Pauline's friendliness, made him almost happy. Mr. and Mrs. Selby joined them soon after the yacht had gained the shelter of the breakwater. Tom would have been glad to go on shore at once to stretch his legs but Pauline insisted that it was much too late, and made it very clear that she wished him to remain with her.

Accordingly they strolled up and down the deck watching the rapidly lengthening shadows of the hills and the bald summits turning from bronze to purple and then to gray, as the sun sank over the westward ridges. The breeze freshened. Slowly

the stars pierced the twilight, and presently, even while the horizon was still flooded with red and orange streamers, the yellow moon slowly forced its way up above the pines of the eastern shore of the bay, until the channel between the islands was turned to undulating gold.

Tom was up betimes the next morning in a singularly care-free frame of mind. The advice of his erstwhile hostess, as well as Parradym's discourse upon matrimony, had faded from his recollection. In place of the sharp east wind of the previous afternoon there was now a languorous southwest breeze which enveloped the island in a golden haze. The sun beat warm upon the deck. Clad in the immaculate white flannels in which he had graced the Casino at Newport, Tom, leaning idly against the rail, smoked one of Pa Selby's after-breakfast cigars, convinced that it was very good to be alive, especially on board such a magnificent steam-yacht as the *Pauline*. He experienced a recrudescence of those original feelings on his first morning at "Beausejour" when he realized that he was enjoying for nothing that which others had, at some distant period perhaps, toiled to procure. After all, he thought, perhaps he had been too hasty in making up his mind to let Pauline go so easily. Fascinating as Lulie was, a matrimonial adventure with her might well prove unsatisfactory in the long run. There was, he decided, a good deal to be said in favor of playing the game of love along the lines of respectability.

If, as Parradym had urged—nay, had even implored—him to believe, marriage was a *sine qua non* of happiness, could he do better, after all, than to take Pauline? He tried to think of her detached from her millions, and succeeded in convincing himself, at least temporarily, that there were few more charming girls to be found anywhere. Was she not beautiful, or at least exceedingly pretty? Was she not cheerful, bright, and well educated? Indeed, was she not far and away the most attractive young woman that he had met that summer? Could he, in fact, do half as well? Wasn't it rather hard on a girl to throw her over simply because she was burdened with a bank-account which was no fault of her own? The millions would not do any harm. On reconsidering the matter, it even seemed to Tom that they might be of some slight advantage. Without them, certainly, it was quite unlikely that he could indulge in the pastime of yachting which he now found so agreeable.

He made up his mind that Parradym had really been rather disappointed at discovering that he had not proposed to Pauline. Obviously it was Lulie whom Parry was worrying about, and even if Pa and Ma Selby were not to the manner born, were occasionally guilty of slight solecisms, and sometimes even of vulgarities, they were far and away preferable to many parents-in-law that he had seen even at Newport. He admitted that, in his first excitement, he might have indulged in rather extravagant dreams as to what he would do with Pauline, her

money, and her yacht, after he had annexed them. The idea of rushing off to the Ionian Isles, and that sort of thing was obviously ridiculous.

As he gazed through the smoke of his cigar at some of the palatial summer residences on the not far distant shore, he concluded that the thing for him to do after marrying Pauline was to buy a few acres on the water-front and build a modest residence with a private landing, where he could keep a launch or two and a knock-about. He was too active to go floating around the world without any exercise, drinking champagne and playing bridge. That could come later. For the present they could spend their winters in a comfortable apartment in New York, and their summers at Bar Harbor, where he could take up golf, become the champion tennis-player of Mt. Desert, and incidentally give Pauline all the opportunity she wished for society.

He was in the midst of these reflections when he heard his name called in a boyish voice from below.

"Oh, you Kelly!" it cried.

A canoe containing a tow-headed youth had stolen up past the *Pauline's* stern, and its occupant was now gently holding its nose to the wind wh making vigorous contortions of joy in the direc tion of Tom, who had difficulty in recognizi th friendly stranger since his face and bare arms v burned so brown as to be almost black.

"It's me, you lobster! Crowninshield!"

"Hello, Dick!" shouted back Tom. "Thought you were a nigger. Had breakfast yet?"

"Four hours ago," answered Crowninshield, who had now brought the canoe to a point directly beneath Tom. "What do you think I am, a gilded loafer? What are you doing up there anyway?"

"Yachting," retorted Tom loftily, annoyed that Dick should not have heard of his distinguished career at Newport.

"Ain't you the swell though?" continued Crowninshield. "You look as if you had just stepped out of a department store. Put on a sweater and come for a paddle with me."

"I'm sorry," replied Tom, "but I have an engagement at the Casino."

" 'Swimming-pool,' I suppose you mean," sniffed Dick. "We don't have Casinos down here in Maine. We leave 'em for the Newport chappies. How long you going to stay?"

"I really don't know," answered Tom from above. "I believe Mr. and Mrs. Selby expect to stay about a week."

At that moment he felt a curious superiority to his former friend and clubmate. Ever since he had entered college, particularly during his Woolsack period and up to his experience at Newport, Tom had always regarded Dick as a tremendous swell, his family one of those whom Tom had been brought up to regard with an almost religious awe. His two months at Newport, however, had changed his point of view completely. To the now elegant

and cosmopolitan Kelly his provincial Bostonian friend seemed a person of very little consequence, virtuous perhaps, but not at all interesting. And yet it was not this attitude which caused him to hesitate, as he was hesitating, to invite Dick on board the yacht. It was rather the subcutaneous suspicion that while he, Tom, was quite satisfied with the change in himself which the two months had wrought, his friend might have a more critical attitude. He was not obtuse to the contrast between the brown muscularity of the lad in the canoe and his own sleek puffiness due to high living. It was different at Newport. Everybody was the same down there. But his old chum looked as if he kept in training all the year round. Somehow Tom did not fancy the idea of Dick looking him over, and perhaps saying in his rough, blunt way: "Getting fat, aren't you, old top?"

The fact could not be dodged that "old top" had been getting fat. If he had, however, it was none of Dick's business.

"Saw in the paper that Calkins wiped up the ground with you in the fourth round of the International Tournament," continued his clubmate somewhat severely. "I lost ten dollars on you, curse you! We were all betting here that y would be 'runner-up' at least. What was t matter with you?"

"The better man won," said Tom, with an ec of the grandiloquence with which he had offe his hand to Calkins at the Casino after his def

"Too much lush, *I* guess!" growled the boy in the canoe. "I was afraid of it in Cambridge. You were crooking your elbow an awful lot, long before Class Day."

Tom made no reply to this insult. In fact there was none to be made. It was "lush" that had done it, and he knew it. He also knew that "lush" was still doing it, but in spite of his intolerant and rather insolent attitude, there was a friendliness about Crowninshield that kept Tom from taking offense. He began to reconsider his decision not to invite Dick to come aboard. Still uncertain as to his course in the matter, he temporized by demanding sharply:

"What are you doing around here yourself?"

"Oh, tutoring," answered the crewman. "Got two sub-freshman brats over at Seal Harbor. Mother pays me twenty-five a week to act as dry nurse. They're not bad kids, though. One of them can pitch an incurve that would puzzle old 'Slide' Kelly —your namesake. It isn't bad fun, if you like boys. Besides I'm boning up for the law school. Going to try to do three years' work in two, so I can get married a year sooner. Knew I was engaged, didn't you? No? Well, I am. To Becky Chase. You met her on Class Day."

Tom had met her, a red-cheeked, rather robust, and very Bostonese young lady, whose father was the clergyman of a small church in Milton. He was about to formulate some congratulatory remark of a properly elegant character when he heard

the swish of a skirt, and Pauline joined him at the rail.

"Miss Selby, allow me to present my friend, Mr. Richard Crowninshield," said Tom in a dignified manner.

The tow-headed crewman grinned at Pauline and waved his hand.

"How d'y'do!" he called up. "Saw your yacht come in yesterday afternoon, and so I paddled over from Seal Harbor this morning to look her over. Didn't expect to find Tom here."

He gazed at Pauline admiringly.

"She's a beauty!" he remarked with some ambiguity, looking at Tom.

"Won't you come on board, Mr. Crowninshield?" asked Pauline. "We should be delighted to see any of Mr. Kelly's friends."

"I don't mind," answered Crowninshield.

Paddling toward the companionway, which was situated some fifty feet farther forward, he tied the canoe to one of the brass stanchions and sprang lightly up the steps, with an elasticity and verve that filled Tom with envy.

He was rather shocked at his friend's clothing, which consisted apparently of a sleeveless jersey, white duck trousers fastened with a narrow leather belt, and a pair of white sneakers into which h feet were thrust through heavy gray knitte woollen socks. Tom suspected that he had nothi else on at all. Crowninshield looked in fact l like one of the crew of the *Pauline* in a moment

relaxation than a collegian, although in face and figure he resembled a young Viking.

Pauline was obviously much struck with their visitor and insisted, to Tom's annoyance, on taking him over the boat. The two were gone some time, during which Tom ruminated on the fickleness of womankind.

XXVI

"WHAT a nice boy!" exclaimed Pauline, as Dick, with a final wave of his paddle, drove the canoe bounding toward the breakwater. "So intelligent and good-looking!"

"Yes—bully fellow!" responded Tom, without enthusiasm. Somehow Crowninshield's unexpected arrival had put his nose out of joint. He hadn't at all liked the way Pauline had started right into run after the fellow. But Dick had been just as bad. It was quite evident that he had been smitten. Well, anyhow, he was safely tied up—engaged to that yellow-haired doll in Milton, compared with whom Pauline was a goddess—yes, a goddess! Of course, she'd make a hit at Bar Harbor, and there'd be a dozen fellows after her. If he was going to do anything it was high time—before her attention became distracted. She would be a wonderful girl—even if she didn't have a cent. Indeed, she would! And she had the money besides. Wouldn't he be a fool to throw her away? He turned and gave her a naval salute.

"Well, commander!" he said, "Shall I order the launch to take us ashore?"

Tom had been under no misapprehension abou Pauline's making a hit at Bar Harbor. Inde

she was surrounded by a horde of very young men from the moment she placed her foot upon the Dirigo Landing stage, and Tom and Parradym found themselves shoved entirely into the background by an eager band of young suitors, who swarmed over the yacht at all hours and rushed Pauline by carriage across the island to distant inaccessible spots for afternoon walks and moonlight picnics. Tom, in fact, began for the first time to feel a slight tinge of jealousy at Pauline's ready neglect. Moreover, he was forced more than was agreeable to content himself with the society of Pa and Ma Selby, whose banal conversation soon drove him to seek refuge in solitary walks upon the shore. He decided that he was being placed in a rather ridiculous position and after twelve days of semiboredom proposed to Pauline that they should climb a mountain together.

It was a cloudless autumn morning, and in the translucent atmosphere the distant mountain-tops seemed close at hand, and following a well-marked path over a pine-covered spur, they soon climbed to where the town and harbor seemed to be lying at their very feet. There, too, at her mooring lay the *Pauline*. The air was full of the soft, fragrant smell of pine-needles and sunburnt moss. Above them an eagle hung, a dark speck against the deep blue of the sky's arc. Pauline sat down to rest for a moment upon a ledge of rock, stained with lichen, from whose moss-grown crevices peeped tiny flowers. Eastward the Atlantic rose against the white hori-

zon, here patched with windless spots, there flurried with catspaws. It was a soundless, motionless world, save for the flicker of a few small birds among the yellow birches and scarlet sumacs. Nature was resting. In the lazy morning sunlight she was luxuriating after her summer, and drowsily lying without even drawing breath. The air had that warmth and yet that freshness that at once sends a glow to the heart and thrills the senses. The leaves had not yet fallen. On the near-by mountainsides the background of the evergreens was mottled with irregular patches of brown, of purplish red, of rose—picked out here and there with one golden gleam of a single tree or one drop of scarlet blood.

Presently Pauline silently arose and began following the path again. Soon they reached the crest of the nearest ridge, and they could see behind them all the blue waters of Frenchman's Bay, dotted with spruce-covered islands. The hills lay all around them, their tumbled outlines fixed in a wrinkled smile. To the west lay sixty miles of coast, island outlying island, with dim, distant shapes of islands still beyond, bounded by the misty ghosts of vague hills to the northward and the still, even line of the horizon to the south. Along this moved almost imperceptible little dots—the markers of ocean traffic along the great highway from Cape Sable to Pollock Rip.

As Tom gazed about him he could not but marv at the glory of nature. It was, as Parradym h

said that very first evening at Newport,—immortal. There was no note of death in this radiance of the visible world; it was the blush of health, not the iridescence of decay—the leap of sap at the first touch of frost.

A kind of exaltation stole over Tom, and his dormant spirit, submerged in materialism, raised itself in response to the beauty about him. Here on this mountain-top the world lay at his feet—a radiant world. As he inhaled deep breaths of the keen autumn air, his heart thumped against his ribs with the unaccustomed exertion of climbing, and the blood tingled in his fingers and toes. He felt gloriously alive—for the first time in months; strong with the resilient virility of youth; and for an instant saw the vision that youth only glimpses —followed the glean until it vanished over "the uttermost purple rim." What a world! What ecstasy to be young—young as in truth he was, like Crowninshield! He wanted to shout across the valleys to the neighboring ridges, to hurl inanities against some echoing cliff, to stretch up his arms and clutch that hovering eagle from the clouds, to push some huge boulder from its prehistoric bed, and roll it down the mountainside. He did, in fact, attempt to throw a dozen or so of small rocks into the ravine beneath them and was rather disappointed to find how far short they fell of their goal. Having worked off his superfluous energy, he sat down again to a calmer appreciation of the scene around him. Pauline was resting upon

a neighboring ledge, her full young bosom rising and falling rapidly. Seen sharply in profile against the sky-line, her neck and chin bore a grotesque resemblance to her mother's. The discovery distressed Tom, coming as it did just as his soul was quivering with romance.

While his spirit eye flashed across the smouldering ocean to the opalescent cloud-banks on the eastern horizon, his material eye fixed itself rather critically upon the proposed object of his affections. Yes, she certainly did look like her mother—the line from the point of her chin to the little curl between the cords on the back of her neck was too long, much too long. But that wasn't her mother's; the neck was Pa Selby's! Not that it mattered particularly whether a girl looked like her mother or her father, only Tom had always recognized the fact that Pa Selby had a rather undesirable neck. In its mature and completely developed state it was equipped with two small rolls of fatty tissue on the back. Of course Pauline wouldn't ever be like that, but the realization that she had anything at all of her father about her was like having a skeleton at his feast.

She looked around at Tom just at that moment, conscious that he was gazing at her, and smiled frankly at him. She was a nice girl, even if she did look like her father and mother. But the alteration of her position produced another unfortunate result, disclosing as it did a row of tiny beads of perspiration upon her upper lip and forehead. At

any other time or on any other girl the natural result of physical exercise would not have affected Tom unpleasantly, but coming upon the heels of his appreciation of her resemblance to her paternal parent, it discomfited him. He would, under the circumstances, have hesitated to kiss her.

But Pauline saw only adoration in Tom's glance, and she blushed quite prettily and cast down her eyes. It is doubtless too much to assert that of themselves these trivial physical facts would have altered the course of Tom's entire future life. Having made up his mind to marry into the Selby family, he would probably have carried out his purpose—even with the additional discovery, inevitably apparent under the noonday glare, that Pauline's upper lip was covered with a slight down. Tom had never kissed Pauline. He had never really wished to kiss her. And now, although he knew perfectly well that she was ready to fall into his arms, he was forced to admit that the idea of kissing her was distasteful—would require an effort. As she sat there "hunched up" on the rock, she gave an impression of being rather pudgy. After all, Parry had probably been right that time when he had declared the whole sex business was overplayed. There they were alone in a beautiful place —surrounded by the mountains, the sea, and the sky. He might as well get it over with. He felt quite clear that he wanted to put the business through, no matter what! Pauline might not be a pocket Venus, but she was an almighty pretty

girl, and Lulie was out of the question for several conclusive reasons. His heart began to thump violently, and the blood surged up into his ears and eyes, not from emotion, but from excitement. He dimly heard himself clear his throat and say:

"Pauline—I—I want to say something to you!"

He saw her turn a darker red. He had difficulty in forcing himself to go on, for he felt like a housebreaker. She was such an easy mark. But two millions! She was looking away from him with a studied air of unconsciousness.

"You know," he continued, "I——"

He stopped abruptly. From above came the sound of voices and the rattle of displaced stones. Two strangers were approaching along the path. Pauline raised her head impatiently. The climbers were now in plain view, striding swiftly toward them. Obviously, it was no time for him to clasp Pauline's well-developed figure in his arms and press her downy cheek to his. There would of necessity have to be a short intermission in the programme. Then the interrupted act could go on. He experienced an extraordinary sense of relief. He wondered if people who were going to be hanged felt like that when they were reprieved.

"Somebody's coming!" he remarked, throwing into his voice a note of disgust which he by no means felt.

"Yes," replied Pauline wearily.

The climbers were now almost upon them. Tom arose and lit a cigarette with a *degagé* air, then

struck a picturesque pose as a girl came bounding up the path.

"Why, Tom!"

He turned quickly to find himself confronted by Evelyn, her hand outstretched, a smile upon her face. She was clad in dark-brown khaki, and wore walking-breeches covered by a short skirt, beneath which Tom could see a pair of slender, brown-stockinged calves terminating in two small moccasins. Around her neck was a bright-red, loosely knotted, flowing tie that appeared to reflect the color in her dark-olive cheeks. To Tom she seemed like a lithesome youth, a beautiful boy—some cupbearer of the gods. His heart gave a single great leap.

"Tom! Whoever expected to meet you here! Dad! It's Tom Kelly!"

She made no attempt to conceal her pleasure. As for poor, jaded Tom it was like suddenly stumbling upon an ice-cold, limpid spring in the midst of an arid plain.

"Evelyn!" he cried, eagerly wringing her hand.

"Pew tooth!"

"Pew tooth yourself!"

They carolled joyously at this mystic countersign, and Pauline looked around at them almost as if annoyed.

"Oh, Pauline!" There was an unaccustomed freshness in Tom's voice—a new note. "Miss Selby, I want to present Miss Russell."

Evelyn crossed to where Pauline was sitting and offered her hand.

"How do you do?" she said cordially.

Pauline took the hand without arising from her rock. There was something about this young Hebe that she instinctively did not like.

"How do you do?" she remarked stiffly. "Excuse my not getting up!"

At that moment Professor Russell joined them and, after greeting Tom, was likewise presented to Miss Selby, who made it quite apparent that she was rather bored by the whole incident. Evelyn and her father, however, were clearly delighted at meeting Tom, and charmed at being introduced to Miss Selby. Tom somehow vaguely resented the fact that Evelyn accepted his being alone upon a mountain-top with a young lady quite as a matter of course. He would have preferred to have her take it more as Pauline had done. It appeared that the Russells were staying at Seal Harbor, and were enjoying their annual week's tramp over the hills of Mt. Desert before the opening of the university. They had started before sunrise, had climbed Sargeant, crossed "The Bubbles" to Eagle Lake and Green Mountain, and were now about to descend its southern ridge, returning home by way of Jordan's Pond—a ten-hour trip. The mere recital of the undertaking filled Tom with astonishment and Pauline with fatigue. The Russells had followed Tom's career in the National Tournament with interest, and had been greatly disappointed at its early blight.

He watched them disappear up the mountainside

with regret. He would have liked to go along with them—get hold of the professor for a good long talk, and chuck Pauline entirely. It seemed ages since that evening at the little house on Appian Way. He wondered what had become of Frank True, and felt a stab at his heart as he recalled the humiliating experiences of Class Day. Well, plainly Evelyn bore him no resentment. Instinctively he contrasted her trim figure and agile mentality with the ample proportions and slower intellectual processes of his companion. What a corking girl she was! All the virtues of Pauline combined with the fire and cleverness of Lulie. Well, he'd lost his chance, such as it was. Parradym's words, the first night out, came back to his mind: "If you ever meet a girl you love—in the right way—go after her—through fire and water, if need be, and don't let up until you get her, or you're dead." He sighed. If he'd only known as much about woman then as he did now! It was too late. But that was the kind of girl one could love—in the right way! He turned to discover Pauline gazing at him suspiciously.

"Who was your young friend?" she inquired.

"Oh, a girl I used to know in Cambridge," he answered carelessly.

They sat in silence for several minutes. The unexpected appearance of the Russells had produced a sudden change in the atmosphere. The temperature had distinctly lowered. The words Tom had uttered seemed to have been still-born.

Yet the girl lingered, evidently still hoping that he might speak.

"Well," he remarked when the silence had at length become embarrassing, "what do you think, shall we go on down again?"

Pauline made one last effort.

"You were just going to say something when your friends came along," she reminded him. "What was it?"

It was a blatant challenge, unmaidenly perhaps, but, let us hope, excusable.

Tom looked at her blankly. Then he took out his gold case, offered it to her, and lit a cigarette as if trying hard to remember something.

"Was I?" he asked in a puzzled fashion. "I haven't the remotest idea what I was going to say."

The return trip of the yacht was accomplished without incident, and she dropped her anchor in the East River with the relations of Pauline and Tom still, so far at least as the girl was concerned, *in statu quo*. Whatever it was that had choked off Tom's proposal upon the mountain still operated effectually to gag him. Pauline herself had not offered him any further opportunity. She had assumed an air of indifference. She was in fact listless and miserable.

"Didn't he speak to you?" had demanded her mother, on their return to the yacht.

Pauline shook her head.

"He didn't and he won't!" she answered disconsolately. "Something's come over him."

"I never heard of such a thing!" retorted Ma Selby with a maternal resentment. "I should have thought he would have just jumped at such a chance. Of course, he will soon. All he needs is a little help. Young men never know just how to go about a thing like that. Why I had to *ask* your pa, *myself!*"

Mr. Selby was even more outspoken. The young jackanapes! Had he popped yet? What did he think they'd asked him off on the yacht for, anyhow? He'd stir him up, he would. Of course, it was just laziness. At this Pauline, however, protested vigorously. There was no use trying to force people, and, after all, she had only known Tom two months. He was a dear boy, but she could get on without him if need be. They must promise to leave the whole thing to her. And this they somewhat reluctantly did.

Tom had written to his mother from Bar Harbor that he expected to look for a position in New York, and that as soon as he should be successful he would run on to Boston to see her. Meantime, he said, his address would be "The Waldorf" where the Selbys had an apartment, and where they had asked him to come to them for a few days at the end of the cruise. As nothing had occurred which would justify the withdrawal of this invitation, and as both Pauline's parents, whatever may have been that young lady's private opinion, confidently ex-

pected Tom to make good at an early date, no reason existed for any change of plan. This was indeed a fortunate solution of Tom's difficulties, since he was entirely devoid of funds, and would otherwise have been obliged to seek shelter with Mrs. Jones at Roslyn.

Tom accordingly arrived at the Waldorf under circumstances which might well have induced the belief that he was, or at least was about to become, a permanent adjunct of the Selby *ménage*, a consummation which in the eyes of the clerks, head-waiters, hall-boys, bartenders, porters, and other attendants was devoutly to be wished and which rendered him an object of their tenderest regard. For Pa Selby was well-known at the hostelry, not only as a distributor of fabulous largess, but as a giver of tips upon the market which had enabled more than one employee to retire upon a fixed income.

A smiling valet welcomed Tom to a suite directly across the hall from the apartment occupied by the Selbys. His evening clothes were already laid out in faultless order upon the bed, and a bath was ready for him in the adjacent white-tiled bath-room. There was even a tiny sitting-room with upholstered chairs and a mahogany table, upo which under a Tiffany glass lamp had been p the evening papers. It was, he thought, alm as "swell" as "Beausejour." He bathed, dres with luxurious deliberation, and, having a f minutes to spare before the dinner hour, betho

him of calling up Lulie's apartment, of which she had given him the number, on the chance of finding her in New York. Rather to his surprise she answered the telephone herself and, to his relief, he discerned nothing in her tone to indicate that she resented his having abandoned her to go yachting with his present host. The sound of her low voice over the wire thrilled him as it had done the first evening that he had met her at the Scotts'. She had found herself lonely at Newport, she told him, and returned to the city for the autumn. Lonely for whom? Perhaps he could guess. Anyhow, telephones were such horrid, public things! Wouldn't he come up to see her at her apartment that evening? She was tired and wasn't going out. Tom, who had business to talk over with Mr. Selby, for once permitted discretion to prevail over inclination, and invited her to dine and go to the play with him the following evening instead. Then with a few whispered partings—so low that even an experienced telephone-girl would have had difficulty in interpreting them—he hung up the receiver, his veins throbbing riotously.

The Selbys were on the point of going down to dinner when he joined them in their elaborate drawing-room. Tom, who had never been in a big New York hotel before, was amazed and even rather dazzled at the crowds of people, the lights and the noise, and it is probable that he might have felt somewhat ill at ease had he not been personally conducted by Mr. Selby, who was received by the

head waiter with magnificent, and at the same time with affectionate, distinction. With an all-embracing wave of his hand, intended to indicate that whatever they saw was theirs, he led the way to an orchid-decked table in the centre of the room, simultaneously inquiring with solicitude after the health of Monsieur, Madame and Mademoiselle Selbee. Pauline's drooping spirits seemed to revive in this friendly atmosphere like withering flowers under a warm rain. Evidently she was quite at home in hotels, and a general favorite in this one. She chatted familiarly with the "Captain," who took their order, about various Alphonses, Pierres, and Victors, and ordered special dishes, her penchant for which was obviously well-known to him. Before long she had engaged the almost undivided attention of five waiters, had ordered a window opened and the door closed. But the readiness with which all her demands were acceded to was fully explained by the size of the bill which Mr. Selby left beside his finger-bowl at the conclusion of the meal. Once more Tom congratulated himself that he was getting a free ride. He wondered what the cost of a dinner could be when you gave the waiter five dollars at the end of it. Glancing stealthily at the menu under the guise of selecting a dessert, he rapidly calculated that they had certainly eaten at least thirty dollars' worth If he was going to keep up his end with Lulie would have to begin to get busy!

They left the table, the ladies carrying with th

most of the decorations which had been pressed upon them by the attendants, and Mr. Selby suggested that Tom and he should have their coffee in the foyer, where they could see "all the folks." Accordingly they strolled through "Peacock Alley," where Tom secured his first glimpse of that bewildering concatenation of humanity which makes a New York hotel one of the most interesting places upon the globe, and finally came to anchor in the café, where the waiter brought Mr. Selby his own special box of cigars from the "humidor."

Mr. Selby had been carefully considering the problem of Tom's relations to Pauline ever since the yacht had left from Bar Harbor, and had concluded that the secret of Tom's hesitancy lay in the fact that as yet he, as prospective father-in-law, had said nothing definite regarding the material future. He remembered perfectly what he had told Tom about the brokerage business, and attributed his tardiness in declaring his intentions to a natural desire to be at least apparently self-supporting. Therefore, after he had finished his cognac, he approached the subject with characteristic subtlety by remarking:

"Well, I suppose you want me to make good on what I said about giving you my business."

To the credit of our hero it must be here asserted that Tom had never consciously associated Mr. Selby's offer of financial assistance with his daughter's future matrimonial arrangements. He did not do so now. On the contrary, he merely at-

tributed to Mr. Selby a generous friendliness toward himself entirely divorced from any interest that he might be supposed to have in Pauline.

"I'll be mighty grateful," he answered readily enough, "if you give me any of your business. It would be pretty tough starting out here in New York without any backing."

"Bet your life!" agreed Pa Selby succinctly. "A hard crowd to break into, believe me. But I can fix you up. There ain't many brokerage firms that would turn down *my* business. I'll give you a letter right now to Westbury & Wheatland, my brokers, and tell 'em to make you a special partner."

"Oh, do you think they'd do that?" asked Tom, aghast.

"We'll see whether they will or not!" declared Mr. Selby. "Maybe you don't appreciate what a pull I've got down-town. And *my* pull is *yours*. See? That is if we pull together," he added significantly.

Tom, however, did not grasp the connotation.

"I guess there won't be any difficulty about that!" he assured his host with enthusiasm.

Mr. Selby's expression relaxed and his face beamed.

"I'm glad to hear you say that, son!" he exclaimed. "Put it *there!*"

And he held out his hand.

On Wall Street Tom experienced some difficul in finding the brokerage office of Westbury & Wh

land to whom Mr. Selby had given him his letter of introduction. In spite of the self-confidence engendered by his successful social career at Newport, he could not help feeling somewhat insignificant amid the throng upon the sidewalks. But at any rate his frame of mind was entirely different from that of the famous Dick Whittington on his arrival in London with his mouse-trap in his pocket. Whittington had intended to be lord mayor of London, but to be mayor of New York would not have satisfied Tom. His vision resembled rather that of Lord Rosebery, with the slight difference, however, that Mr. Tom purposed to marry not only one of the richest, but also one of the most beautiful women in the country. Nevertheless, with all his self-assurance, he did not create any noticeable stir upon Broadway, and could hardly be said to have attracted any attention at all except from two yellow-haired young ladies who were drinking soda-water at the fountain of Mr. Blake's corner drug-store, and for whose approving regard our hero felt duly grateful.

He had rather anticipated that the abode of Westbury & Wheatland would turn out to be a stately building of Carrara marble with plate-glass windows through which the passers-by could discern at a respectful distance the partners themselves, moving among their customers arrayed in frock coats and tall silk hats. That at least had been the impression conveyed to him by Mr. Selby; but the number of Wall Street which corresponded

with the one upon the envelope in his hand proved to belong to a dingy, brown-stone structure whose narrow hallway was paved with dirty marble, and whose stairs were cramped and winding. Westbury & Wheatland were not even upon the ground floor. They were only up one flight, however, and Tom, having climbed the necessary distance, found himself in a sunny suite of old-fashioned green-carpeted offices, full of deep-seated leather chairs and sofas, and hung with railroad maps. A group of men were standing around the ticker by the window, and at one end of the room a clerk in an alpaca jacket was busily hanging up little square figures to indicate the prices at which the various stocks were selling across the way in the big exchange. There were perhaps ten persons in the entire place, and Tom looked vainly for some employee to whom he could state his business. Nobody appeared to wait on him, however, and as the youth hanging up the numbers hardly seemed free to run errands, Tom had no choice but to grapple with the situation himself. Accordingly, still wearing his hat, since he noticed that most of the other persons in the office were wearing theirs, he approached the ticker, and accosted the first back he saw there.

"Beg pardon, could you tell me where to find Mr. Westbury?" he ventured.

The particular back toward which he had directed the inquiry remained seemingly oblivious of his existence. It was a well-shaped back with

broad shoulders, and covered with what the Cambridge tailors had been accustomed to describe as a "nobby" suit of black-and-white check. The back proving unresponsive to merely verbal approach, Tom unhesitatingly tapped its owner on the shoulder.

"Can you tell me—" he repeated; but the completion of the sentence was interrupted by the sudden turning around of the man to whom the back belonged.

"Eh?" he began. He gazed quizzically at Tom out of not altogether friendly gray eyes. "Well, I'll be damned!" he concluded.

Tom recoiled abruptly. He had not expected thus to encounter Lulie's husband at the threshold of his budding financial career. He found himself growing uncomfortably warm, and with his heart pounding violently. He was in fact quite unable to speak.

Mr. Wingate seemed fully appreciative of the humor of the situation.

"Not looking for me, are you?" he asked, smiling.

Tom swallowed and shook his head. He was looking for one of the firm, he said. He had a letter of introduction which he wished to present in person.

"That's all right," responded Wingate, "I'm a member of the firm myself. You want to talk to Westbury, I presume. Give me your letter and I'll take it in to him. Don't mind waiting a few minutes, do you?"

Tom would have surrendered the contents of

the Congressional Library had he been possessed of it in order to get rid of Wingate at that moment, and he unhesitatingly handed over the letter which Mr. Selby had given him. It was rather a staggerer to find that Wingate was a member of Westbury & Wheatland. He wondered, as he waited, if it really wouldn't create an impossible situation. You could hardly expect an injured husband to take his wife's corespondent into business with him, could you? Well, Selby would put him in somewhere else that was just as good. There was more than one office on Wall Street. He began to feel better. The men around the ticker were all smoking cigars, and Tom taking out his elegant gold case began to smoke too—a cigarette. He was surprised at the rapidity with which the prices of the stocks changed upon the board at the end of the room. The men at the ticker did not seem conscious of his presence, and once, to show that he was quite at home, Tom strolled over and ran the tape through his fingers, quickly retreating, however, startled at his own temerity. Wingate was taking an awfully long time! He kicked his heels together nervously. Who did they think he was, anyhow, to be kept waiting in that fashion? Presently, however, Lulie's husband came out of the inner office and nodded to him.

"All right," he said. "Mr. Westbury would like to have you step inside. By the way," he added, "when you get through with him I'd like a word with you myself if you don't mind."

Mr. Westbury, a florid, keen-eyed man with a close gray mustache, arose and shook hands with Tom, and motioned him to a seat. He had the air of having all the time in the world.

"Mr. Selby says you are looking for a job."

"That's it," answered Tom, with an easy assurance which he was far from feeling.

Mr. Westbury tapped his desk with the edge of the envelope in his hand.

"The conditions are a bit unusual," he went on, swiftly appraising Tom with his sharp eyes. "We really don't need anybody here. We receive most of our orders over the telephone, and have our regular customers. The board out there is really only a convenience for a few of our friends who like to make our office their headquarters. But, of course, we can make room—we'll *have* to make room for you, if it comes to that. We can't afford to lose Mr. Selby's business."

Tom felt an access of confidence. It was true, then. Old Selby must be a heavy trader.

"That is for you to say," commented Tom. He did not observe that Mr. Westbury was biting his mustache.

"Putting it bluntly, Mr. Selby proposes that we should make you a special partner, your profits to be calculated on the amount of his business plus anything else you may bring in."

"Well, don't you think that a fair proposition?" asked Tom.

Mr. Westbury shrugged his shoulders.

"We cannot make you a special partner. That is out of the question for many reasons. We are willing, however, to give you a nominal connection with our house and to pay you a thousand dollars a month salary until we see what you are going to be worth to us. How does that strike you?"

Tom assured Mr. Westbury that this would be eminently satisfactory to him.

"You can come here or not, just as you please," continued Westbury. "If you bring in any other business, we'll give you some sort of a bonus. You ought to be able to pick up quite a lot around the clubs and hotels, particularly if you can get any tips from Mr. Selby. You can stay away as much as you like. Just telephone, if that suits you. There's really nothing you can do here, you know."

"All right," answered Tom, nothing loath to be his own master to such an extent. "When do I get my salary?"

Mr. Westbury gave a slight laugh.

"First of every month," he answered shortly. "Want any money? We'll give you an advance if you like."

"Just as you say," replied Tom in a lofty tone.

Mr. Westbury pressed a bell and to the clerk who entered in answer to it remarked:

"Draw a check to the order of Mr. Thomas Kelly for a thousand dollars——"

Then turning to Tom, he said:

"Well, good luck to you! Hope you make a lot of money!"

Tom received his check in the outer office. He had hardly expected any such concrete evidence of Mr. Selby's interest—so soon, at any rate. Yet he had the equivalent of a thousand dollars actually in his hand! A thousand dollars! His first real money! Enough to pay back all that he had borrowed from Allyn, and have a couple of hundred left besides. He almost forgot about Wingate in his excitement and haste to get the check cashed. But Wingate did not let him escape.

"Well," he said pleasantly, "now that business is over, can you give me a few minutes? What do you say, shall we sit down here? Perhaps we had better go into my private office, eh?"

"Suit yourself," answered Tom, distrustful of any Greek bearing a gift.

He followed Wingate down a narrow passage until they came to a small room at the end of the suite. It was a cheery place, with a fire burning in an iron grate, and the sun pouring in through a single huge window, beneath which there stood a desk. On the top of the desk was a large framed photograph of Lulie! At sight of it Tom hesitated and almost dropped in his tracks. Wingate with his wife's picture! Lulie's girlish face looked out archly at both of them, the husband and the boy.

"Good picture of my wife, isn't it?" said Wingate quietly, sinking into a revolving-chair, and motioning Tom to an adjacent sofa.

"Very good, indeed—I should say," replied Tom, redder now than ever, and endeavoring to assume an air of light indifference.

"Of course, that picture was taken over ten years ago," continued Wingate critically, "but she's hardly changed at all. She was the prettiest girl of her year,—in fact, for a good many years."

Tom was becoming more and more uncomfortable. Wingate had him at a disadvantage and was making the most of it, although Tom did not ask himself what the other's purpose was. It was enough for poor Tom that under the circumstances it was quite impossible for him to demand what all that was to *him*. Hang it, of course, Wingate had a right to assume that he was interested in Lulie. The blush that had at first been only a dull red now burned scarlet across Tom's cheeks and forehead.

"You may be surprised at my speaking to you this way, but I can't help it. I know my wife pretty well. I know how beautiful and how damned fascinating she is. But I know something more about her or I wouldn't be sitting here in my office with *you*, young man. And that is that my wife never went wrong with any man and never will."

Wingate's honest gray eyes were fastened upon Tom's face. He was speaking gently, almost tenderly of his wife.

"I was madly in love with Lulie—have always been in love with her. I guess I'm in love with her now. I think she used to love *me*. She still loves

me sometimes. But I wasn't clever enough for her and I bored her. I'm only a stock-broker. I never went to college. Maybe I'd have bored her just as much, if I had. But she was one of those girls who get a bad start, because she never knew anything about real life. New York and Newport is full of them. I don't wish to tire you, but I think you ought to have a word of explanation about Lulie. I appreciate it's not all your fault. But then it isn't all hers either. It's partly the fault of conditions. You see, she has never had to do anything for herself in her entire life. She was brought up on governesses and French maids, and always had her breakfast served to her in bed on a tray. But her mother took good care of her and she was strong. How she could swim! The only things Lulie ever knew she got second-hand from novels and other girls who had them off their maids and hair-dressers. Sweet trick for a mother to play on a girl, isn't it? Smoke?"

Tom nodded. He would gladly have given Wingate his thousand-dollar check in order to escape, but common decency compelled him to listen. His hand was quite unsteady as he lit the proffered cigarette.

"That isn't giving a girl a fair chance! Her mother brought her up to believe that the only kind of life worth living was what you get down on Long Island; taught her to look forward to nothing but dances and dinners, and flirting all the rest of her days; and incidentally that children

were just a nuisance. Honestly, Lulie hasn't any idea of a home, without half a dozen footmen in powdered hair and knee-breeches. What chance has a girl *got*, I ask you?"

He inhaled a deep breath of cigarette smoke.

"And then they brought her out with a great fanfare of trumpets. For two years she went to a ball every night, and stayed in bed all the next day. For two years she was the centre of a whirlwind of artificial excitement. Every unmarried man made love to her, and a good many married men. She was fed up on it. Then she married me."

He laughed amiably.

"I suppose I was rather a come-down for Lulie, although I filled the bill so far as money and what you call social position go. But her mother was satisfied, and so was she for a while. Then it got to be an old story. You see she'd become convinced that she would hold the centre of the stage all her life. She'd been flattered and adored and petted until she had to have admiration or die of drought. And suddenly, after this hectic two years of débutante life, the whole thing dropped with a thud. She was married; she refused to have any children—the idea filled her with disgust and horror, and she had nothing to do. Whether she wanted a boiled egg or an elephant steak s could get it by simply pressing a button. And, I say, she was perfectly strong and well. She l to have *some* outlet for her energies, so she beg

to take on a few admirers. She told me all about 'em, laughed at 'em with me. But she was so pretty —is so pretty, they used to lose their heads over her. I can't blame her or them very much. And the thing grew on her! She just couldn't live without it. I can understand it easily enough. Her mother had made her think that her whole life was going to be one triumphal procession, and then the procession petered out. She ceased to be a débutante but she still had the débutante point of view! She had to be made love to in spite of the fact that she was married already and wasn't willing to pay the price of love."

He knocked the ash from his cigarette.

"We had rows. Not because she'd done anything really wrong, but because she was getting herself talked about and making me ridiculous. She went back to her mother half a dozen times, and then when she got tired of that started in again with me. Of course it's grown on her, but it's not as bad as if she drank or took drugs. But sometimes I don't think she's quite all there." He tapped his forehead. "There are lots like her. The doctors tell me that if she'd had children it would have been different. She's never fulfilled the purpose she was made for. You see there's a nervous side to it. She's got an unconscious—totally unrecognized—maternal instinct that craves satisfaction, and there's nothing to satisfy it. Some women take it out on dogs. You understand."

Tom had started to his feet, his eyes blurred

with indignant tears. Wingate waved him sternly back.

"I've been speaking in defense of my wife and in behalf of a lot of useless, miserable, neurotic women who can only play at being alive. I've got more to say, though. As I tell you, I know that Lulie never did a really wrong thing—you know what I mean. And she never will. Why, that night you met her in the hall we'd been talking things over—*you* among 'em. I'd met her at the Welfleets not long before, and we'd had a jolly chat in the garden and patched it all up. Then you came along and spilled the beans. Don't you suppose I know you were drunk? Of course you were. But it might have happened even if you'd been sober,—and the other way 'round at that. Of course, I had to stand on my dignity in the household, but I know Lulie wasn't to blame *then*. The trouble is they're all against her now. No use explaining. I didn't want to make a fuss, so I got out. Six months from now Lulie will come around again and we'll fix things up.

I want to say two things to you. First, I want to warn you against ruining your young life chasing after my wife. She'll play with you, and then throw you away like a rag doll. She doesn't care a damn for you or any other man alive. She cares only for herself. She's as hard as nails and cold as ice. And she's as wily when she's playing her game as a heathen Chinee. For instance, she's not above trying to make you think I'll divorce her and name

you as corespondent. My God! You! Ha! Ha! That's the kind of thing she does to put ginger into the game. Yet she knows that I wouldn't divorce her under any conditions. She's my wife and I'm going to protect her *no matter what!* See?"

Wingate had thrown away his cigarette and was leaning, forward pointing a long forefinger at the now utterly humiliated and partially frightened Tom.

"And that brings me to the second thing I've got to say to you, young-feller-me-lad! I don't care how much you burn your fingers letting Lulie pull the wool over your eyes. You are free to play the game and make anything out of it you can—which won't be much. But—" and he rose and stood threateningly over Tom, "if you once do or say anything—you understand, *anything*—in public or elsewhere that compromises my wife in any way, I'll thrash you until I break every bone in your body, and I'll leave you so your own mother wouldn't recognize you. Is that plain enough?"

Tom slipped out of his chair and got upon his feet. He was thoroughly scared, for Wingate had by this time quite lost control of himself. He had no desire to get into a fight, particularly when he knew that he was in the wrong. The husband of the woman he thought he loved stood before him quivering with anger, his fingers moving spasmodically. He now made a vague gesture toward the door and tried to speak.

"Get out!" he finally blurted.

Tom did not delay in carrying out this order. He "got out," as he picturesquely expressed it to himself, "while the getting was good." In fact, the precise method of his departure remained a permanent blank in his recollection. Once down-stairs and out upon the street, he realized forcibly, however, that it would be most embarrassing to be associated in business after what had occurred with a firm of which Wingate was a member. The mere thought of climbing the stairs again and explaining matters to Mr. Westbury filled him with dismay. Wingate would probably be prowling around somewhere, and be disagreeable if not dangerous. It would be much more tactful and far safer to write a letter, and return the check which now, of course, it would be quite impossible for him to keep. He fingered it with regret, representing as it did the largest sum he had ever had within his control. There was no help for it. He would have to send it back. He would simply have to go to Selby and get from him letters to another brokerage firm. The hands of the clock on Trinity church pointed to a half after twelve. There was just time to reach the Waldorf comfortably before lunch.

He found Mr. Selby amusing himself by looking out of the window and smoking one of the long black submarine cigars which he affected. The ladies, he said, had gone out shopping, and purposed lunching anywhere—wherever they happened to be taken hungry. He listened with interest while Tom gave an emasculated narrative of his experiences of the

morning, nodding commendation or scowling disagreement as the case might be. But when his guest endeavored to explain why he could not associate himself with the firm in question Mr. Selby was clearly mystified. Tom took the position that as he was an intimate friend of the Scotts it would be manifestly improper or at least exceedingly awkward to be connected in business with Wingate, who as a matter of common knowledge, was separated from his wife. If nothing else, such an association would certainly prevent his getting any of the Scott business, which might be large. Mr. Selby, however, couldn't see it at all! Half the men you knew were separated from their wives! Business was business, and matrimony was matrimony—or bad business, as you chose to regard it. He chuckled at what he regarded as a very good joke. Tom in his opinion was making a mistake. Westbury & Wheatland were one of the strongest houses on the Street—did, in fact, an *ee*normous business. The proprosed connection would be worth fifty thousand a year! He shook his head. No, the alleged reason was no reason at all!

Tom, however, was obdurate. Unable to tell Selby the real cause of his refusal to join Westbury & Wheatland, he merely insisted upon the assumed one, and requested Mr. Selby to give him letters to some other firm. This his host was disinclined to do. He didn't like the idea, he explained, of having Tom rush all over the Street turning down good jobs for fanciful reasons. In the long run it

would be bad for him. Westbury & Wheatland were his regular brokers, and he didn't want to leave them. The old fellow was obviously quite distressed at the situation. He wanted, he said, more time to think it over. However, he had a suggestion. Why should not Tom see what he could do for himself? He would agree to give him such business as he might have until further notice, and Tom could place it where he chose—with any responsible firm. Moreover, he'd give him a tip and Tom could see what he could do with it. "Chicle" was going up. Not right off, maybe, but before very long. It was good for seven or eight points anyhow. They had lunch together, from which Selby departed hurriedly for a matinee, leaving Tom with an unoccupied afternoon before him.

Lighting a cigarette, Tom sipped a cup of coffee, and then sauntered through the corridors on the ground floor of the hotel, idly watching the people who occupied the armchairs which lined the walls. Presently his eye caught a sign reading "Wertheim & Wertheim," and he found himself at the open door of what appeared to be a brokerage office. There was the usual "board" at one end of the room upon which the prices of active stocks were being recorded, and in front of which reclined an audience of rather prosperous-looking men and a few women. At the other end of the room stood a couple of tickers, and about them were congregated the customary crowd of traders. A tall, alert-looking

young Hebrew who had been standing by the window turned as Tom entered, nodded, and came forward.

"Glad to have you drop in on us, Mr. Kelly," said he affably.

Tom was nonplussed. He was unaware that his name was known to anybody in the hotel outside the Selbys and the room clerk. Young Mr. Wertheim smiled.

"You're a little surprised at my knowing your name? That's nothing. We make it our business to know who is at the hotel. Glad to get a little of your trade, you know. Besides, of course, your being a friend of Mr. Selby's——"

"I see—" remarked Tom. It had suddenly occurred to him that here was a chance to test the value of Mr. Selby's influence and support.

"Doing anything in the market?" further inquired Wertheim easily.

"How's 'Chicle'?" asked Tom in a low tone hardly aware that he had uttered the words.

Wertheim glanced at the board.

"Forty-one," answered the broker in the same key, but manifestly interested. "Anything doing?"

Tom nodded mysteriously.

"It's good for a rise," he remarked confidently. "Not at once, necessarily. But it's good for seven or eight points, believe me."

Mr. Wertheim became instantly agitated.

"Is that straight?" he whispered.

"Straight from Selby—within ten minutes."

"Look here," responded Wertheim, "come into our inside office, won't you?"

He grabbed Tom's arm and hastily pushed him through a glass door into a small room, empty save for a table with a telephone upon it.

"Suppose we take a flyer?" suggested the broker eagerly. "I'll carry you for a thousand—for the tip."

Tom, who had not the remotest idea what being "carried for a thousand" meant, nodded.

"I don't mind," he answered.

Wertheim unhooked the receiver of the telephone and murmured into it rapidly. Then he hung it up.

"You just leave this all to me," he said to Tom. The bell rang and Wertheim took up the receiver again.

"Got it," he exclaimed, "Forty-one and an eighth."

"Got what?" inquired Tom.

"Two thousand shares of Chicle," answered Wertheim with a puzzled look. "Say, it's all right, isn't it?"

"Why, of course, it's all right. I told you it was going up," replied Tom.

"Well—I think I'll start her along now," answered his new friend. "You wait here—or, if you prefer, get over by the board and see what happens."

Tom, entirely at sea as to what it all meant,

started out among the crowd, watching while Wertheim moved from group to group. The man at the board suddenly changed the card under "Chi" to 42. A few moments later he altered it again to 42¾.

Wertheim came over to where Tom was standing.

"She's moving," he whispered.

There was no doubt about it. Chicle was moving—jumping in fact. Before many minutes had elapsed Chicle—whatever Chicle might be—had gone successively from 42¾ to 43, to 43½, to 44¼, to 45, and then to 45¼.

At that point Wertheim hastened again to Tom and dragged him once more into the office.

"Look here!" he cried, "I'm for getting out quick. What do you say?"

"I would," agreed Tom for no reason in the world save to be agreeable.

The broker used the telephone once more, his face pale with excitement. Then he sank back with a deep suspiration of relief.

"Sold it—at 45!" he ejaculated. "Congratulations!"

He opened a pocket check-book, wrote rapidly and tore out a piece of paper.

"Here you are!" he said, tossing a check in Tom's direction. "A thousand thanks! If you get any more like that, let us know."

"What's this?" asked Tom, gazing stupidly at the check in his hand.

"Your profits, of course. I've given you my *own* check. I'll put it through as a personal transaction. No use complicating matters."

XXVII

TOM continued to regard the check doubtfully. It was the largest sum of money he had ever had in his possession, a stupendous amount, more, probably, than his father had ever earned in a single year, far more than the present total of his mother's annual income. And he had got it by doing nothing at all! Yet Wertheim had handed it to him as a matter of course. Old Man Selby had indeed a pull! His words were golden words, or rather golden keys to unlock the doors of fortune.

Tom did not, in fact, have a very clear idea of what had happened. He knew that in some way or other he had purchased stock and made a profit on it. He had not meant to buy it, but then, if Wertheim had taken it that way—! It was not until later that he fully realized that, had the stock gone down, instead of up, he could not have covered the resultant loss which the firm would thus have been obliged to bear. But, as it was, he saw only a smiling broker and a large check.

"Glad to do business with you any time," said Wertheim, laying a hand on Tom's shoulder and producing a box of cigars. "Have a smoke?"

"No, thanks," replied the youthful financier. He was thinking as rapidly as he could. "Suppose

I got you a lot of business—would you pay me a salary?"

"*Would* we?" ejaculated Wertheim. "Just watch us!"

"I guess I could swing quite a lot of Mr. Selby's trading your way," ventured Tom.

"Fine!" returned his companion.

"All right," answered Tom. "I'll see what I can do. I'll drop around in the morning."

Wertheim and he shook hands, and Tom sauntered out with his check. It was only a quarter to three, the whole affair having occupied less than half an hour. How easy to make a lot of money—if you only knew how! He crossed the street, deposited his voucher, secured a check-book and returned to the hotel writing-room. He could now pay off Allyn and relieve his mind of an anxiety which had of late grown constantly greater.

Yet as he drew the check to his friend's order for the eight hundred dollars which he owed him, he was not altogether easy in his mind. It did not seem, somehow, as if the check *could* really represent eight hundred dollars. He thought of the petty economies with which his mother's existence had always been filled, the inevitable turning off of the gas when not in use, the saving of odd half-sheets of writing paper, the substitution of newspaper "spills" for matches, the thousand and one ways in which she had managed to eke out her income in order to send him to college, and at the same time keep a home open for him to go to.

Only he hadn't gone! Really he must take a run up to Boston soon and see her. How would it do to send her a check for a thousand dollars? Something told him that she would not take it if she knew the source of its origin. She had always referred to the stock exchange as if it had been the portico of the infernal regions. Narrow-minded, of course! But curiously enough Tom felt something of the same superstition. He could not send her a check for so large a sum without explanation, and any truthful explanation would, he knew instinctively, render the gift unacceptable. However, he mailed a check to his tailor in Cambridge for his long-overdue account and paid whatever other bills he could think of. They were not numerous, although they aggregated nearly thirteen hundred dollars, and he still had over two thousand dollars left when he had finished.

Two thousand dollars! He kept repeating the words in a sort of sing-song—"two—thous—an*dol*—lars—two—thous—an*dol*—lars!" Two thousand dollars? Why he could spend a thousand and still have another thousand dollars left. In a few days, when he'd amassed forty, or fifty, or maybe a hundred thousand, he'd take a special train, and go up to Boston to see his mother. That would be after he'd made all his arrangements with "Wertheim & Wertheim." Then he would come back a full-fledged business man, and his mother would be satisfied, so long as it was his regular occupation.

He leaned back in a leather lounge-chair, and

planned what he would do when he returned home. Well, first his mother should go right over to Boylston Street, to that swell "Madame Irene" the "Parisienne Modiste," and order a couple of dresses. There had been enough seamstresses in the house, cluttering up everything, leaving their chalk and wax around, and eating their meals at the table! Imagine! Huh!—eating with a seamstress—even if she *was* called "Miss"! Yes, his mother should have a wonderful black silk dress with real lace, and some decent shoes.

He remembered with a shudder the stubby little kid shoes, rubbed almost white on the toes and sides, which his mother had always insisted on wearing. New shoes for mother! Made to order!

A glow of benevolence possessed him. He'd give her a surprise, a diamond pin in the shape of a cross; he had once heard her express the preposterous wish for one, with an embarrassed laugh at the absurdity of the mere idea. Probably she had prayed the same night to be forgiven for "coveting" her neighbors' goods! He laughed. Well, by thunder, she should have the pin—*two* pins!

And then there was Bridget. She would have to give up wearing her hair in that ridiculous knob on the back of her head. It made her look too much like a "Biddy." She was a "Biddy," of course, but she was a good "Biddy"—a sort of an aristocratic "Biddy." Now that they could have a butler, if they wanted one, to keep on with Bridget would be a gracious sort of thing to do—"*noblesse*

oblige"—"*ancien régime*"—and so on. "Old family servant." But she must fix up her head, and wear a cap—a nice white cap. And learn to mix drinks —temperance drinks——

Tom cracked his fingers and beckoned to a waiter.

"Here, bring me a brandy-and-soda!"

He scratched off a check for a hundred dollars, and handing it to the man, who received it with obeisance, ordered him to cash it.

Then the front door needed to be sandpapered down and varnished. He'd have that attended to. Also the carpet in the hall before the door was worn threadbare. New carpet! Gosh, it was fun to spend two thousand dollars! Up-stairs he'd rip everything out—chuck away *all* the old junk—hair sofas and so forth. Hair sofas! Oh, Lord! Imagine *him* sitting on a hair sofa! They might do for Aunt Eliza—or Uncle Ebenezer. He would take out the gas—his mother was always smelling around for leaks—and install electricity. "Install" was a good word. He liked the sound of it and repeated it several times. And—of course! Why hadn't he thought of it before—the bathroom! His mother should have a tiled bathroom with all the most modern fixtures—instead of sitting on a rotten old wooden seat with her feet in a spotted tin tub! But there would have to be somebody to take care of the bathroom—a maid! A neat, rosy, pretty maid in a black dress, white cap and a dinky little apron like a "doily." No more

"doilies"! And there would be finger-bowls *at every meal* no matter what his mother said! He returned rather fondly to the idea of the maid. He'd pick her out himself or else his mother would get an old scrawny one. There was lots of style in a maid.

At this point the waiter returned with the brandy-and-soda, the glass being flanked with a pile of yellow and green bills. Tom handed him one off the top of the pile with a grand wave of his hand. It wasn't even a case of "keep the change." He was away beyond just little old "keep the change" —he gave *bills!* He stuffed the mass of paper into his pocket without counting it, and began to imbibe his brandy-and-soda.

He reverted again to the maid. She must be trim, slender, dark, with big eyes and a lot of wavy hair. She would answer the bell, wake him up in the morning and lay out his pajamas in the evening. He began to have slight doubts as to his mother's approval. Their waitresses—when they had any—had always been huge, broad-backed, hairy peasants—Swedes, Finns, Lithuanians—Croates even! He wondered if there had been any *arrière-pensée* in this selection of female Brobdingnagians on the part of his mother. Shy old *mater!* He remembered now a black, fiery little Irish girl from Kenmare that his mother had only kept overnight. Yes, the maid must be more like *that.* He found himself engaged in conjuring up a very vivid picture—a picture that resembled some

one—strongly. He would not think of Evelyn in this mood. His thoughts having now turned to Lulie, he ordered another brandy-and-soda. What a wonderful, soft, alluring creature she was! Beside her Pauline was a clodhopper—a stout clodhopper! He recalled that night in the hallway of the bachelor wing at "Beausejour," and the next night in the rose-garden. How reluctant, yet how pliant she had been! He must have quite a way with him. He projected other nights—in rose-gardens—and elsewhere. Hadn't she said she was lonely?

Tom dressed and hastened from the hotel without asking either for Mr. Selby or the ladies and, having purchased two dozen American Beauties at a florist's on Fifth Avenue, called for Lulie in a hansom. He had never ridden in one before and felt rather rakish in consequence. There was something unusually intimate in being jiggled up and down that way on the back seat, and when the cab-horse stopped unexpectedly you were tossed backward in a sort of delicious confusion. They dined expensively at a rather poor restaurant in the park, talking in innuendoes, and reaching the theatre at the end of the first act. He wondered several times if what Wingate had said about his wife were true—that she was only playing with him? He thought about it a good deal in the theatre and it worried his pride somewhat. One thing he was sure of, he wasn't just going to hang around Lulie for the sake of spending his money on her. He felt confident that Wingate was flattering him-

self, whistling to keep his courage up. He had warned Tom not to compromise her! Well, how could he compromise her, if she were only trifling with him? He had no intention of compromising her anyway, but he refused to believe that she was not serious with him. What did Wingate know about it? He had claimed that she made him a confidant regarding her affairs! Well, she might talk over her affairs with her husband simply for the purpose of putting him off the track. Besides, at the time of the famous marital conference in the Welfleets' garden, Lulie had only known him an hour or so. She couldn't have talked him over *much*, that was sure! There was nothing in it. During the last act he pressed his arm against hers and received an answering pressure that filled him with ecstasy.

On the way home in the hansom he kissed her twice before they reached her apartment. In spite of his violence, she promised to drive with him again the following evening, and he stood for several minutes on the sidewalk in front of her apartment-house holding her little hand. But she did not ask him to come in.

XXVIII

Tom slept late the next morning and, after a hearty breakfast in his sitting-room, dressed in a leisurely fashion and then strolled over to the Selby apartment in search of his patron, whom he found as usual smoking contemplatively before the window.

"Well," said Selby slyly, after the first salutations were over, "I see Chicle got a move on!"

"It came up nobly to the scratch," answered Tom. "What shall I tell 'em to-day? They expect the very latest information, you know."

"So-ho!" exclaimed Selby. "Got a job already?"

"A sort of one."

"Where?"

"Down-stairs. There's a firm of brokers right in the hotel. They say they'll pay me a good salary based on any business I bring in. Of course, I didn't have any orders for them, but I passed along your tip on Chicle. Are you doing anything in the market this morning?"

Selby seemed amused.

"You might buy me a couple of thousand shares around 46," he agreed carelessly. "But let it go if it touches 48."

Tom noted the figures carefully upon the back of an envelope, thanked him, and arose to go.

Pauline's name had not been mentioned. In fact, he had not thought of her for over twenty-four hours. With two thousand dollars in bills in his pockets she did not appear necessary. Wertheim greeted him warmly, his warmth becoming effusion when Tom gave him Mr. Selby's order. It appeared that Chicle had dropped back a little, and they secured the two thousand shares without difficulty at 45½, but almost immediately an upward movement set in just as it had the afternoon before. Everybody seemed suddenly to be buying Chicle, at least everybody in Wertheim & Wertheim's, and most of the customers evinced an undisguised interest in Tom, whose self-esteem rose momentarily as Chicle bounded upward. Other stocks were neglected, and the bystanders at the ticker indulged in all sorts of speculations as to what was going on in the company. It was the loudly expressed general opinion that the stock had recently been "neglected," and that there was "real, basic value" in the property. Tom encouraged this belief by dropping dark hints as to "developments" in the near future. Somebody promptly organized a small pool and the stock was pushed up beyond 49. As instructed, Tom sold out at 48, and had the satisfaction of knowing that at any rate Mr. Selby had not lost money on him.

He hung around the office until the close of business, then partook of a light lunch in the café, and

thereafter amused himself by strolling up and down Fifth Avenue and Broadway until it should be time to dress for dinner and call for Lulie again. His second evening with her passed off much as had the first. Again they dined to music—this time at a Fifth Avenue restaurant, and again sought amusement at the theatre, after which she submitted as before to being kissed in the cab, and bade him farewell upon the sidewalk. Tom began to feel somehow that Lulie was not playing the game. He couldn't have explained why exactly—or what he expected, but there was a sort of anticlimax about it all. She was more tantalizing than ever—especially as she had now adopted a quasi-Platonic attitude toward him. It was quite *quasi* considering what went on in the cab, but she acted as if whatever passed between them was of a merely friendly character—a boy and girl relationship that had no significance. All her hints about the darkness of her future had abruptly stopped. She was, apparently, quite satisfied to have Tom calling for her in a cab every evening, taking her out to dinner and the theatre, and then kissing her good night at the end in what she chose to regard as a brotherly fashion.

The effect on Tom was, probably, exactly what Lulie had anticipated, and he returned to the hotel each night after leaving her, to toss sleepless on his bed for hours. This went on for four days, during which time Tom each morning dropped in on Mr. Selby, received an order to buy or sell,

usually several thousand shares of stock, secured from him a trifle of information regarding Chicle, visited Wertheim & Wertheim's, whose customers now hung on his every word, and spent the rest of the day in idleness awaiting the moment when he could feel the soft pressure of Lulie's arm against his, and drink in the odor of the violets which she wore upon her bosom. And meantime Chicle went soaring, and the ticker world at large became convinced that something mysterious was doing in it. Strange customers, emissaries in disguise, from other stock-brokerage firms, appeared at Wertheim & Wertheim's to hear what the new prophet had to say about the future of this and other securities, and hung upon his words as upon those of an oracle, demanding to be told what to do.

Wertheim admitted nervously that he had gone in again for Chicle rather heavily—was in fact the chief holder in the pool, and dogged Tom's footsteps for the very latest news from Selby. It was a bit embarrassing—this enforced attribute of omniscience—and when Chicle went down, as it often did momentarily, he felt almost responsible for its eccentricity. On these occasions he was accustomed to seek Dutch courage in a tall glass of brandy-and-soda. Cigarettes, of course, were the instruments of his profession. He had nearly forgotten the existence of Pauline and her mother. The face of Lulie, with the languorous droop of her eyelids, the smell of her hair, the touch of her body, the mur-

mur of her voice, filled his veins with liquid fire, and drove every other thought out of his mind so that he acted as a mere automaton. Selby had seemed rather cool toward him the last day or two, but he had come to have a feeling akin to contempt for the old codger. The days were something merely to be endured until he could see Lulie—his Lulie!

It was on the Friday after they had returned to New York that his infatuation reached its climax. Things could not go on this way, he told himself, any longer. There had got to be a show-down between them. Her indifference was driving him frantic. She must get rid of Wingate—or something. He had passed a sleepless night and arose red-eyed, jumping, almost hysterical. He could eat nothing for breakfast, but drank a large cup of black coffee and a "bracer" before dressing. Selby had gone out when, as usual, he called at the apartment. He lit cigarette after cigarette in a vain attempt to steady his nerves. Wertheim & Wertheim would be, he knew, anxious for something about Chicle which had now climbed to 61. Well, it was "still good," he guessed. He had made up his mind about Lulie. He wasn't going to be put off any longer. He'd take her out to dinner, but he wouldn't take her to the theatre. He would insist on going back with her to her apartment. She would have to fish or cut bait. He wasn't going to be made a fool of any longer. He'd find out—know where he stood.

Muttering these and similar expressions, he en-

tered Wertheim & Wertheim's, and was immediately surrounded by a crowd of anxious "investors" who demanded to be told anything that Mr. Selby had let drop that morning about Chicle. Tom assured them that it was "all right—still good," adding a few imaginary trimmings of the same general pattern out of his own head. The stock, however, did not display its customary firmness, and "backed and filled" up to the time that the market closed, the last quotation being two points below the highest for the day. At five minutes after three Wertheim excitedly dragged him into the inner office.

"Look here," he ejaculated, "I don't like the the way Chicle is acting. We've got close onto nineteen thousand shares in this office and most of it is on five points margin. Are you *sure* it's all right? Nobody's been unloading on us, have they?"

"Of course not!" returned Tom with impatience. "It's as good as gold. *I* didn't tell you to load up with it, anyway. You bought at your own risk. I merely repeated what Mr. Selby told me about it."

Wertheim was chewing the end of his cigar in great agitation. All his usual *savoir-faire* had disappeared.

"It's true Mr. Selby has been buying—but then he's been selling, too," he said. "He probably has other brokers. He may be running a pool of his own. It means ruin to me and my brother if

he is. Why, we may have been buying Selby's own stock all the time!"

"Nonsense!" retorted Tom. "He is giving me all his business just now. You needn't worry."

Wertheim's little gimlet eyes were fastened on Tom's face.

"I know you *think* so!" he answered soberly. "But you might be mistaken. And if you were, Wertheim & Wertheim would be busted, that's all. I'd get out to-morrow morning—sell in London before the opening in fact—if I thought there was any chance of your being wrong."

"There's no use being so excited about it!" tartly answered Tom. "Everything's all right. The stock will probably keep on going up all the way to par. But if you'd feel any better about it I'll ask Selby, when he comes in this evening, what he thinks and let you know."

"The trouble is," explained Wertheim anxiously, "I'm going to Schenectady at four o'clock. If we're going to get out of Chicle I'll have to cable London to-night."

"Couldn't I telephone to you in Schenectady?" inquired Tom.

"I don't know where I shall be staying," replied Wertheim dejectedly. "Shan't know until I get there. But I could telegraph you as soon as I arrive when and where to call me up. Will that inconvenience you?"

"No—not at all!" said Tom generously, realizing that, after all, he was in a measure responsible for

the rise in Chicle, and Wertheim's embarrassment. "I'll call you up before midnight and let you know what Mr. Selby says. I'll be glad to do that for you."

Wertheim looked relieved.

"Thanks—awfully!" he ejaculated.

It was all rather a bore to Tom, but he felt under obligations to Wertheim—they were partners in a way. He'd taken nearly four thousand dollars out of the firm. It wouldn't be much trouble, after all, to call the broker up on the long distance telephone. He could do it right from Lulie's apartment. Lulie! How could he wait until eight o'clock to see her?

He ordered a drink for himself in the café, and then called Lulie's number on the telephone only to be told by her maid that her mistress was out and not expected back until six o'clock. It was raining and the hotel air was heavy and depressing. Disconsolately he threw himself into one of the leather chairs in the foyer. Yes, it was time to know where he was at with Lulie! He'd ask her to go away with him that very night. He had money enough for the present. This suspense was insupportable. He could fix things up with Wingate somehow. He wouldn't make a row if he was satisfied that Lulie really loved some one else. There was nothing in it any other way. It was all or nothing. They couldn't stay as they were. His cigarette-case became exhausted and he refilled it at the cigar counter. At five o'clock he went

up-stairs, bathed and began to dress for the evening.

His preparations completed, he rang for the evening papers and a gardenia, which he placed in the buttonhole of his dress-coat. He had still an hour to wait before it should be time to call for Lulie. The valet had pulled down the curtains of his sitting-room and turned on the lights, and now Tom put a match to the fire and sat down before it in an armchair. Outside the rain drove in heavy gusts against the windows. He was very tired and his right eye and temple ached fiercely. Now and then the muscles in his legs jerked spasmodically. He leaned back his head and closed his eyes, listening to the soft snapping of the coal in the grate. The warmth was comforting to his soul. Soon he became drowsy. Just as he was on the point of falling asleep there came an unexpected knock upon the door behind him.

"Come in!" he answered automatically, thinking it might be a boy with a letter or the perennial pitcher of ice-water. Then, to his surprise and embarrassment, he discovered that it was Pauline, and he staggered shamefacedly to his feet.

"Why, Pauline!" he stammered.

She was in a low-cut evening gown, her cheeks were flushed and her eyes unnaturally bright; and he noticed that she was twisting her fingers nervously as she came toward him.

"Tom!" she besought him, almost pathetically. "Where have you been?"

He muttered something about having been very busy—dropping his eyes like a schoolboy before her frank gaze. Something told him that just as he had intended to have it out with Lulie, Pauline had come to have it out with him. She was close beside him now, looking at him with intent, pleading eyes.

"How badly you look!" she exclaimed. "Is anything the matter?"

"I don't feel very fit," he replied awkwardly. It occurred to him that it wasn't exactly the thing for a girl to drift into a fellow's room like that. Suppose her mother should come along?

"Don't you want to come into the drawing-room?" he asked in a weak voice. He would have given all the money in his pocket to have been there.

"No," she said, and her voice sounded curiously flat. "I wanted to see you alone." She paused. "Haven't you anything to say to me? We haven't seen each other for nearly a week, and we've been right across the hall from each other all the time."

Again Tom tried to stammer out some sort of an explanation. It was beastly rude, he admitted, rotten, in fact, but there had been so much to do—business and all that, for her father—he hoped now he'd got started it would be different—they'd have to go to the theatre or something soon—he stopped, realizing that he was talking into the air. Pauline was watching him anxiously. Already her instinct told her that the situation was hopeless. Indeed,

she had suspected it to be so from the first night upon the yacht, and the suspicion had been strengthened by what had occurred upon the mountain-top. But she was unwilling to let Tom go without a struggle. He was standing before the fire, his head upon his breast, unwilling or afraid to meet her eyes.

"Tom!" she cried, and in her voice there was a note of agonized yearning.

He raised his eyes—he could not do less, and his lips quivered. After all, he was only twenty-two. He hadn't meant to hurt Pauline—didn't want to hurt her. Her face was close to his now, and he could see big tears in her eyes.

"I—Pauline!" He choked. "I guess I've been a brute!"

"No! No!" she wildly protested, holding out her bare arms to him. "You've been a perfect dear—always! Tom! O Tom!" She pressed one arm to her eyes and, before he could draw away, threw the other around his neck. "Love me!" she sobbed with her head on his shoulder. "Love me, Tom! I can't live without you!"

Tom, wretched with self-reproach, put both arms around her.

"Don't, Pauline!" he ordered. "You mustn't. You're all upset! You're not yourself!"

She shook her head, weeping convulsively.

"I love you! I love you! You *must* love me! I shall die without you! Say you love me! Tom! Say you love me!"

She clung to him like a frenzied child.

"Pauline!" he answered sharply. "You must stop! Do you hear? Stop! This—this won't do at all! I'm very fond of you, of course. You know that. But I don't love you—the way you mean!"

"Oh," she sobbed, letting her arms fall away from him. "Oh!"

She drew back slowly, almost reluctantly, her face burning with a deep crimson, in spite of her wet cheeks.

"Oh!" she cried, her voice vibrating with shame and anger. "Oh!—I hate you! I hate you!"

And turning on her heel she rushed out of the room.

Tom stood there shocked and humiliated, appreciating fully that he and no one else was responsible for this unpleasant scene, yet endeavoring to convince himself that he had not at any time intentionally deceived Pauline as to his feelings toward her. His attempt at self-justification, however, was far from satisfactory. He had really played fast and loose with her—even if it were equally true that she had taken rather more for granted so far as he was concerned than the circumstances warranted. Poor Pauline! A stout figure blocked the threshold, and Tom suddenly found himself confronted by "Poor Pauline's" father. The little man was glaring at him aggressively, a large cigar blazing fiercely in front of h bellicose features. Slamming the door behind him

without turning around, he advanced toward the rug upon which Tom was standing, removed the cigar with his left hand and clinched his right a short distance away from Tom's nose.

"You young whippersnapper!" he shouted. "What you mean by treatin' my Pauline this way? I thought—everybody thought—it was all fixed up 'tween her and you! Now she's gone in there to her room cryin' her eyes out! What you said to her, eh? You tell me, see?"

He made a rather ridiculous figure—suggesting an old hen trying to turn game-cock in defense of her offspring. Tom's feeling of self-abasement instantly turned to irritation.

"I didn't say anything to her!" he retorted. "She did all the talking herself!"

Pa Selby glowered at him indignantly.

"I guess she wouldn't take on so unless you was partly to blame!" he returned in heat. "Anyhow I won't have my little girl talked to so's to make her cry. You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"I tell you I said nothing to her at all!" answered Tom stubbornly. "If you ask her, she'll tell you so herself."

Selby rubbed his chin and returned the cigar to his mouth. He had not intended to precipitate a quarrel with Tom.

"What was the trouble about?" he demanded.

"Ask her," answered Tom, feeling that the least he could do was to be loyal to a lady who had made him an avowal.

Selby twisted the cigar around in his mouth.

"Look here," he said finally. "Perhaps it's none of my business. A little lovers' quarrel, maybe?"

Tom shook his head.

Selby turned color.

"Say, you don't mean you ain't in love with Pauline, do you?"

"That is the fact," answered Tom shortly.

"My God!" exclaimed the manufacturer. He sank helplessly into the armchair. "What on earth you been hangin' around her all summer for? I thought you were as good as engaged."

"I like your daughter very much," said Tom with dignity. "But that's entirely different from getting married to her."

"You must have thought I was dead stuck on you!" declared Mr. Selby with a shade of disgust. "Look at the business I offered to give you. Did you suppose I'd do that for any young feller that just came along? Dear me! This is awful!"

He smoked dejectedly during an embarrassed interval of several minutes. Then he looked up at Tom with an effort at geniality.

"Look here!" he began good-naturedly. "I imagine things ain't so bad that they can't be mended. I guess Pauline was a little too much in a hurry. You musn't mind that! Of course, you like her! Everybody likes her. She's a sweet, fine, noble girl, and she's all her mother and me has got. We couldn't be happy a minute without

she was happy. She sets a store by you, I know that. You got to get married sometime. Now, why not Pauline? She'll be a rich girl some day."

He looked eagerly at Tom's face.

"I don't want to marry for money," replied Tom, with a sharp prick of his almost dormant conscience.

"It ain't marryin' for money!" Mr. Selby assured him. "I wouldn't suggest your marryin' Pauline without you loved her. But nobody could help lovin' Pauline. Come now, think it over! There ain't a smarter, prettier girl to be found anywheres than my little Pauline!"

Tom shook his head.

"It's no use, Mr. Selby," he answered, "I don't love your daughter. I can't marry her."

There was a long silence. At length Mr. Selby said very slowly:

"Listen here, Mr. Kelly! I'll give you a million dollars in cash, if you'll marry my daughter."

Tom turned half-sick. It had been one thing to play with the idea of marrying for money; it was another to discover that he was the kind of person whom others believed would deliberately sell himself for money. It was a refined distinction, but it was nevertheless true that for the first time he saw the degrading position in which his conduct had placed him. He was dizzy, faint, nauseated almost.

"No!" he groaned. "No!"

His coat and tall hat were lying upon the sofa and he put them on hurriedly.

"Well, I didn't mean to say anything—" began Mr. Selby apologetically, but Tom had fled. The old man shook his head several times with a puzzled air. "Well, what do you think of that?" he remarked to his cigar. "Well!" he shrugged his shoulders. "Poor Pauline!" And he sighed deeply.

Tom made his way down the marble staircase to the hotel office like one who walks in his sleep. He hardly knew where he was going, his only idea being to escape from the tentacles of the Selbys. He was half blind from headache and in addition he was almost ill with disgust and shame. Automatically he walked to the bar and drank a glass of whiskey. It still lacked three quarters of an hour to seven, and he sat down in a corner and ordered another whiskey and a siphon of carbonic. The Selby situation had blown wide open, no more tips on Chicle, no more orders on commission. He now clearly perceived his actual relationship to these people whose guest he still was. Luckily he could terminate his dependence upon the Selby hospitality. He could and would at once call for his bill at the office and pay it himself. To-morrow he would take rooms somewhere else—unless something happened with Lulie. He would tell her about his experiences, and it might incline her to be more acquiescent in his wishes. He did not ask himself what those wishes were exactly; he merely knew that their relationship couldn't go on as it was. He was all alone in the great city except for

Lulie, and he was solitary and miserable. She was the only person that meant anything to him.

A new element crept unexpectedly into his feelings toward her—a longing to be with her simply because she was friendly and interested in his welfare—a desire to be somewhere where he belonged, or at least was understood. Unconscious of the fact, Tom suddenly began to be homesick for the first time in his life. He filled his tall glass from the siphon and drank half of it, and for some reason it made the ache over his eye seem less acute, although his whole head buzzed and throbbed. He began to pity himself. The Selbys had treated him badly, had wilfully misconstrued a frank and disinterested friendship. Pauline was a man-hunter cheated of her prey. Her father had deliberately kicked him out into the street because he refused to be bought. A million dollars! He ground his teeth impotently, refusing now to admit that he had laid himself open to the accusation of being a fortune-hunter. They were a cold-blooded lot, these rich parvenus! A rotten bunch, that Newport crowd!

He arose uncertainly and, making his way to the office, demanded his bill. He was amazed to find that it amounted to over a hundred dollars. While paying it he recalled his promise to telephone to Wertheim at Schenectady. Well, he couldn't get any more tips from Selby. Wertheim would have to decide for himself what to do. Under the circumstances the broker had better sell in London

next morning before the opening. He would call him up from Lulie's and suggest his doing so. With this in mind, he requested the mail-clerk to forward by messenger any telegram that might come for him to Mrs. Wingate's, whose address he wrote down upon a card.

As he drove in the heavy rain up Fifth Avenue to Fifty-seventh Street he felt that only to be near Lulie again would make him infinitely happy. At the door of her apartment the butler helped him off with his coat and took his hat and overshoes.

"Mrs. Wingate wished me to tell you, sir," said the man, "that on account of the bad weather she has ordered dinner in the apartment."

Tom endeavored to show no concern on receiving this announcement, but that Lulie should of her own accord have anticipated his desires filled him with excitement and trepidation. Had something come over her? Was she really afraid of the wet, or was the rain merely an eagerly seized-upon excuse? At least he was to have the opportunity of forcing the issue with her without having to manufacture or insist upon an occasion. His heart pumped disquietingly as he followed the butler down the hallway and across the threshold of her drawing-room.

"Mr. Kelly," announced the *avant-courier* with a crisp English accent, and stepped back and out.

A fire of sea-coal was glowing upon the hearth, the soft light from a couple of shaded lamps fell upon the gilded binding of books and silver frar and the atmosphere of the room was warm a

heavy with the fragrance of the roses he had sent her that afternoon. To come thus out of the drab, rain-swept avenue into the mellow comfort of this feminine boudoir in itself went far toward satisfying the physical yearning Tom had been feeling for some place to which he belonged—for something more personal than the foyer or bar of a great hotel, and he interpreted this merely physical catlike satisfaction as an evidence of the necessity he felt for having Lulie near him. Indeed the transition from storm to lamplight, from loneliness to the sense of companionship, from emotional discomfiture to the feeling of instinctive sympathy brought the hot tears welling to his tired, red eyes, and set his chin to quivering as Lulie turned to him with a smile from where she was lying on a *chaise-longue* before the fire.

"Well Tom!" she said, and her voice seemed to wreathe itself about him in an embrace, "I thought perhaps you wouldn't mind staying here with me—" she paused inquiringly. "Why, you poor boy! What is the matter?"

Her tone was so kind and sympathetic that it tore away the last barrier of his self-control. By her very gentleness she accomplished that which a less moral quality, however alluring, might have failed to achieve. Giving way utterly to fatigue, loneliness, and spiritual dejection, Tom threw himself on his knees before her and buried his face in her lap.

"Oh, Lulie!" he sobbed, "I'm so miserable!"

"You poor, poor boy!" she answered, stroking his hair. "What has upset you so? You seemed quite happy only last night."

He pressed closely to her without answer. Just what her feelings toward this pompous, egotistical, yet somehow attractive boy were she could not have told. She liked him—probably because he liked her. He was a "decent sort," and she had lured him on instinctively, ready to play with him to the limit. He amused her. He thought he loved her. But if she unconsciously entertained any contempt for him, his childish abandonment and apparent helplessness momentarily brought out all that was good in her.

"I'm so sorry, Tom!" she murmured gently, caressing his temples with her hands. She had never before given any such sign of affection for him. Had, indeed, hardly felt any. She had played the game on the basis of being the pursued—endeavoring to outwit her pursuer and keep him at arm's length. And now because he had come to her for consolation she had taken him in her arms, her better self paving the way for her worst self to follow. Thus angels sometimes unlock the door by which devils enter the fortress of the soul.

XXIX

SOON he became calmer. The touch of Lulie's cool, light fingers, the faint smell of hyacinths that permeated her tea-gown and its soft texture against his cheeks soothed and comforted him. He felt a new tenderness for her. Unconsciously his arm had sought her waist, and now he drew her down toward him and lifted his head to hers——

"Lulie! You do love me, *don't* you?" he besought her. It was the same challenge that Pauline had put to him not an hour before. Instantly her old attitude reasserted itself. She was quite ready to be a little mother to Tom—to any one really in distress, but there was something in his voice that frightened her. She realized that no banter would satisfy him. He had come for his answer and no equivocation would suffice. She was not ready to give that answer, had never been ready to give it on the occasions when other men had called upon her for it, and her woman's instinct of self-preservation drove her instantly into retreat.

Drawing gently away from him, she shook her finger reprovingly before his eyes.

"You mustn't behave this way!" she declared. "The servants might see you. Sh! I hear one of them coming."

Tom scrambled to his feet just as the butler returned.

"Dinner is served, madam," said he. Tom offered Lulie his arm and led her to the dining-room, where a small round table, gleaming with silver, and just large enough for two, was laid before another of the soft-coal fires that she liked. He raised her hand as it lay upon his arm and kissed it in the hallway, behind the butler's back, and when he soberly took his place a moment later opposite her at the table it seemed to him as if he were acting a part. He wasn't a mere guest! He was something more. It was just as if he and she were married. If they were married he would be coming home every evening just like that, and probably be saying: "Well, darling, what have you been up to today?"

However, he was very careful as to what he did say to her before the butler, and only allowed himself the preliminary liberty of pressing her foot gently beneath the table. While the oysters were being served he told her about his cruise with the Selbys and between them they managed to keep the conversation going on a politely conventional basis so long as either of the men servants was in the room. The stimulus of Lulie's presence and the relief of being once more in a sympathetic atmosphere had driven away his headache, and he was even able to enjoy the delicious meal which her chef had prepared. He drank a glass or so of champagne, and his depression passed from him as a

cloud shadow drifts across a summer landscape. He was almost happy—nervously so, but happy. He felt that in spite of her not having said so, Lulie must love him. Wingate had made a wrong diagnosis. He did not understand his wife. What he had said about the unfortunate limitations of her upbringing might have been true enough, but as to her sincerity he was entirely wrong. He was a jealous ass, that was all.

Tom emptied his champagne-glass as fast as the butler replenished it, failing to observe that Lulie hardly touched hers. He had a feeling of possession regarding her, of almost proprietary right in her apartment. He belonged there. Had he not discarded Pauline and her fortune for her? His act at that moment seemed to him almost noble. He had made a great sacrifice, had thrown away a career all for a woman. As he gazed at her across the table through half-lowered lids he told himself that she was worth it. His glance lingered on her slender neck and white sloping shoulders—the tiny lobe of her ear as it peeped firm beneath the black undulating masses of her rebellious hair. He had difficulty in restraining himself from getting up from the table and clasping her in his arms. Oh, well! He could wait until the butler should have left them for good. Lulie smiled with arch eyes at him, under lids raised significantly at the glass which he was lifting to his lips. He drained it with a laugh, however. To-night he would do as he liked about wine and—everything else.

He lit a cigarette with the salad, and gave himself over to the delicious contemplation of Lulie's features and such of her figure as was visible. What white little hands she had! And what a piquant little nose! The champagne was doing its work—so were the many weeks of idleness, high living, and frivolity that he had spent in that circle which Parradym had called "the spindrift" of society, the spray blown by the winds of fortune from the crests of life's waves.

Lulie had passed through several similar experiences, not all of them pleasant. Her different victims had acted quite differently when she had refused to pay the price of their adoration, and for that reason had deliberately broken the spell of her own enchantment. Some had meekly accepted their fate, others had become abusive, but all had taken the *dénouement* as the anticlimax of a game where anticlimaxes were within the code. But with Tom Lulie realized it was somehow different and the realization terrified her, particularly as she saw his confidence growing under the influence of the champagne.

She was not ready to let him go—did not wish to break with him—but her emotions were not ripe for anything else as yet. Wingate had been very good to her, more than forbearing. She knew she had treated him abominably. Tom was nothing but a boy! It was really only his passion for her that attracted her to him. Its strength she did not doubt. She knew that at that moment she could

have done with him as she liked. He would have jumped out of the window had she asked him to do so, and she could not bring herself to surrender the fascination of her power over him. She was ready neither to yield to him or to dismiss him, and being unwilling to do either she recognized that momentarily—in spite of herself—Tom might become a factor in a situation which she could no longer control. So instead of leaving the table at the end of dinner she ordered coffee and liqueurs in the dining-room, and lingered on hoping to postpone until later what she now in terror recognized as the inevitable. When the moment arrived she did not know what she was going to do. If she could only delay it long enough, she told herself fatuously, something might happen.

The butler had been sent away and still Lulie dallied on at the table, its mahogany top a safe barrier against Tom's ardor. He had been leaning on his elbows devouring her with his eyes while she, like Saharazade, talked against time. Suddenly he got up.

"Why sit here?" he demanded suggestively. "Isn't there any better place?"

Her heart fluttered in spite of herself. What was she going to do with her young Turk, now that he believed himself to be her master? Yet she had no logical excuse for sitting half the night at a dinner-table from which the dishes had not yet been removed. So Lulie slowly arose——

"What a long time we have talked!" she ex-

claimed as if in surprise, although her wrist watch had kept her fully informed of the passing of the hours. "Why, it's after ten o'clock!"

She was on the point of finding an excuse for hinting that he should go home, but the absurdity of it was too apparent. No, Tom intended to bring things to a head, and if there were to be a scene it must not be in the open drawing-room.

"You haven't seen my little library," she said, and she led him to the other end of the corridor, and threw open the door of a small room furnished entirely in rose. It was a boudoir rather than a library, although a small bookcase filled with de luxe volumes gave it a colorable claim to the latter designation. A thick carpet, a couple of upholstered chairs, a tabaret holding a gold box of cigarettes, an ornately gilded mirror, several lamps shaded in rose, and a divan with hangings of the prevailing color made up its inventory. The reflection of the lamplight upon the draperies and carpet gave heightened color to Lulie's cheeks, and made her seem as ravishing to Tom as a beautiful gypsy girl. It was the same effect as had been produced by the curtains in the hallway of the bachelor wing at "Beausejour" the first time he had held her in his arms. He recalled the scene vividly.

Lulie struck a match and lighted the tip of a cone of incense that stood before a little jade god on the top of the bookcase, and a thin blue column of vapor rose tremulously toward the ceiling. A strange, Oriental odor floated through the room.

Lulie pushed the cigarettes toward Tom, lit one and threw herself at full length among the cushions of the divan. She felt curiously that fate had taken the game out of her hands—that she was only a pawn. Her actions had become automatic.

Tom closed the door.

"Do you know when I last saw you look like that?" he inquired meaningly.

She shook her head and let the smoke of her cigarette pour slowly from her delicate nostrils.

"In the passage—that night—at 'Beausejour'!"

She smiled, and put one of her arms behind her head.

"You were very bad that night!"

"Not half so bad as I can be!" he informed her, sinking into a chair beside the divan. "Not half so bad as I'm going to be!"

"You mustn't talk that way!" she answered nervously. "You are going to behave yourself quite properly after this. In fact I am going to scold you a little for the way you have been acting the last few days. It really must stop."

"Stop!" cried Tom. "Stop! Why, it's only begun!"

He arose and seated himself on the divan beside her. The last cordial he had taken had made him a little dizzy—or was it Lulie? The moment had come. He would know where he stood. She would have to choose between him and Wingate. He assured himself that he would gladly sell his immortal soul for her.

"Lulie!" he whispered, leaning over her, "Lulie!" and tried to take her in his arms.

All real desire to resist had gone from her, but temporizing still, she lifted the hand which held her cigarette above her head.

"Look out!" she cried, laughing. "You'll be burned."

"I'm burnt to a crisp already!" he cried, dragging her to him and pressing his lips to her hair.

Steps sounded in the hall outside, and there came a rap upon the door.

"Excuse me, madam," said the muffled voice of the butler, "but I have a telegram for Mr. Kelly."

Tom swiftly extricated himself.

"Curse Wertheim!" he cried, but he smoothed his hair and, opening the door, removed the yellow envelope from the salver in the man's hand.

"Excuse me!" he muttered and ripped it open impatiently. At first he found difficulty in focussing his eyes, and he stepped over to one of the lamps. It did not bear Wertheim's name—that was funny! Suddenly his vision cleared.

Your mother is dying. Come home.

BRIDGET MALONE.

XXX

At first he thought there must be some mistake, that the telegram could not have been meant for him. Who was Bridget Malone? The name was unfamiliar. And then much as if some huge, icy wave had dealt him a terrific blow and hurled him along gasping for air and staggering for a footing, the meaning of these six black words on this yellow sheet crashed down upon him, tearing at his brain with iron claws.

His mother was dying. The telegram was from Bridget the cook. He had never known her last name. His mother was dying with only an ignorant Irish servant at her bedside where he should have been. She might already have passed away—alone, neglected. He gave a half sob, half groan of anguish. Mother! He saw her little figure lying there in the walnut bed, the old knitted shawl across her body, her patient face gazing toward the Madonna upon the wall. Again he groaned, hiccoughing forth meaningless words of love and remorse. He no longer knew where he was. He did not see Lulie, nor hear her voice asking him sharply what was the matter. He did not smell the incense or the cigarette smoke of that erotic atmosphere.

Uttering great, shaking sobs, he groped his way

toward the door of the apartment. There was a train for Boston at eleven o'clock—he must catch it. He stumbled to the hallway, threw his overcoat over his arm, and put on his shiny tall hat. He had but fifteen minutes to catch the train. Slipping and half falling, he hurried down the stairs to the street. It was still raining, half an inch of slush covered the pavement. He had forgotten his overshoes and had on only his low-cut patent-leather pumps and orange-silk stockings. There was no time to wait for a street-car or to seek a cab. Sobbing and whimpering, he floundered forth and ran down the Avenue—a ridiculous and painful figure—at one instant splashing through a mud puddle, at the next clutching at a lamp-post to save himself from falling. Once—opposite the Cathedral—he did fall and his hat rolled in the gutter, but he fished it out and kept on with no thought but to catch the train. He began to sweat profusely while the cold rain soaked through his shirt front and ran down his body. His legs were drenched to above his knees. His breath came only in painful gaps. The policeman and ticket seller gazed at him strangely as he rushed to the window to buy his ticket, thinking him just another drunken collegian returning home after a debauch. It was fortunate that he had enough money. Then he drew on his overcoat and walked to the train, a garter dangling below his trouser leg and a gardenia drooping from his buttonhole.

The thought of sleep was anathema. He pulled

his hat down over his forehead, thrust his feet into the corner of the opposite seat, and stared fixedly at the windows as the train rattled through the night. Self-revelation had come to him. He saw himself as he was, and the sight filled him with loathing. Had it not been possible that his mother was still alive he would probably have thrown himself to his death between the wheels.

It was inconceivable that his mother should be really dying. She was rarely ill; an unusually vigorous woman for her age. He tried to comfort himself with the idea that the telegram might be an overstatement of the situation due to panic on the part of Bridget the cook. Probably his mother had had an attack of indigestion or something and, being alone in the house with her, Bridget had become hysterical. But she shouldn't have been there alone with her. He should have been there himself with his mother. It was unbelievable that such retribution should be visited upon him—that the last and greatest of a long life of effacements would occur without his having had a chance to explain to her! He had not meant to neglect her, he had merely wished to take advantage of his opportunities to make a career. Opportunities? For what? Making a beast of himself! A career? As a cheap bounder, a hanger-on of wealthy people, a "pet cat," a parasite! Sitting there in the half darkness, he reviewed the various sordid episodes of the past six months, his low intrigue with Lulie, his mercenary affair with the Selbys, his humiliat-

ing connection with Mrs. Jones, the whole disgusting performance at Newport where he had posed as a sophisticated man of the world, and his dallying with debauchery during the last few weeks, while his mother had been gradually becoming more and more feeble, until now she was dying. He was rotten all through. A heartless, cold-blooded sycophant! And now he was being punished for it. His mother was being taken from him without his having even an opportunity to beg her forgiveness. He raised his hands involuntarily in the dim light, crying out his repentance to God:

"Forgive me! Forgive me! Forgive me!"

The colored porter peering from the vestibule of the car wondered at the strange sight of a dishevelled man in a dress suit and tall hat gesticulating and uttering unintelligible sounds.

"Oh, mother! Mother! Forgive me!" the man kept repeating. "Oh, God! Forgive me!"

At last, exhausted, his head fell against the corner of the seat and he slept. But his sleep was broken and fitful, until in the early dawn he fell into a profound slumber in which he dreamed that it was morning, and that the train had reached Boston.

He hurried to the platform, hired a cab and drove to the house on Newbury Street. The sidewalks were deserted and the curtains were still down in all the windows of the neighboring houses. Sick with fear, he looked for the knob of the bell to see if there were crape upon it. There was none, but the bell-plate was iridescent from neglect, and the

name "Kelly" almost black. He paid the driver, a somnolent night-hawk, and crossed the uneven red brick of the sidewalk. Well, at least he was in time. His mother was still alive! Perhaps, after all, it was as he had hoped—merely a case of panic. His sense of relief was unutterable.

He sprang up the stone steps and almost joyfully entered the tiny vestibule, the door of which was ajar. And then his hand touched something soft but rough, and he drew back with a stifled cry, for on the knob of the door hung a long black flaunting horror—the barbaric flag of death.

He awoke with a shriek and found himself cowering between the seats of the sleeping-car, with the New England autumn landscape sweeping smoothly by bathed in sunlight beneath a sky blue and peaceful as that of midsummer.

"Thank God!" he muttered. "Thank God!"

There was a stirring all along the berths as their occupants prepared to make their exits. Collarless men, clasping bundles of heterogeneous clothing to their bosoms, pushed their way along the aisle. The porter came by with an expectant brush, saying "Boston in twenty minutes!" The train passed Blue Hill and Tom recognized the observatory; then it entered the nearer suburbs and presently was crossing the streets of the West End. He had turned his back upon the occupants of the car, realizing the spectacle which he presented, but he did not care. His only thought was to escape from the train as soon as possible. He must get home.

Would he be in time or would his dream prove to be true? Dreams went by contraries, he told himself. But there was nothing upon which he could pin the hope that his mother was still alive except the vague impression that people didn't die quickly like that. It took quite a long time—even if you were going to die, and so far there was no reason to suppose his mother actually was going to die.

"Boston! Boston!"

Stiff and lame, Tom turned up his coat collar, and left the car followed by many amused and significant glances. Among the line of awaiting cabbies, one seemed familiar to him, and, nodding to the man, he followed him to his blowzy hack and clambered inside. It was stuffy with a combination of stale beer and damp rug. The man's head appeared in the window as he inquired the address, and in that instant Tom recognized him as the cabby in his dream—the somnolent nighthawk—there was no doubt of it. It was the same ramshackle cab, the same moth-eaten rug. An uncanny fear crept up his spine. Had he experienced what he had heard Aunt Eliza call a "warning"? Had he lived over in his dream what he now was to experience in fact? Such things were of record. Was his mother already dead, then? They were rattling over the cobblestones without making much headway—the action of the cab-horse appearing to be vertical rather than horizontal, and Tom opened the door and urged the man to go faster. He felt that he must get out and run.

They reached Boylston Street and then the Public Garden. He was almost there now. In his dream Newbury Street had been deserted, the curtains down. He scanned the windows apprehensively. Yes, it was so—just like the dream. His heart sank. Tom stepped to the sidewalk and paid the man, without looking around. The cab was half a block away before he dared raise his eyes to the front door. It was ajar, but the stained bell-plate and the name "Kelly" were as he had dreamed them. He climbed up the steps with trembling knees and paused, unable to bring himself to look inside the vestibule. Inch by inch his glance stole along the door until it reached the handle. There was no crape there. His mother was alive! The reaction was intense. But in the midst of his relief came the sickening thought that fate might be fooling him just as it had fooled him in the dream. The dream had been all true so far, why not *that* too? Suspiciously he searched out every nook and cranny of the vestibule. No, there was no crape anywhere. Thus he stood shivering alternately with relief and fear on his own door-step, like a dissolute stranger after a prolonged debauch, with stained and disordered clothes, his hair hanging in strands across his forehead, his face gaunt, his eyes hollow and bloodshot—ignorant whether his mother were alive or dead, and doubtful whether or not to ring the bell. And as he hesitated the knob rattled and Bridget Malone opened the door.

She was dressed in a manner different from her

usual one, and her hair was done in a strange way; and he instantly realized that her costume and get-up were in recognition of some new condition of affairs demanding greater formality. His fears returned. Bridget had not spoken to him, but her face wore a look of helpless sorrow. Tom tried to speak but only gave vent to a sort of cluck. Then he stammered in a thick tone:

"Is she—is she—" he could not finish.

Bridget shook her head.

"Your mither is still alive," she answered stiffly. Then she gave a sob and cried out brokenly:

"Oh, Tom! Tom! Don't go to her like that wid the marks of yer sin upon ye! Don't go to her in yer shame! Put on some of the ould clothes in the closet and go to her as she knew ye—her own!"

Thus for the first time did Tom know the full depths of his degradation.

With swimming eyes he tiptoed up the stairs to the little back room, which had been his from the time that he was old enough to sleep alone until he had gone to college. He had always thought of it as ample and comfortable. It had always had the same straw carpet upon the floor, the same white iron bed with the wooden slats, the same pine wash-stand stained with intersecting rings left there by a couple of generations of tooth-mugs. There were no curtains and no pictures upon the walls, but it was clean. From the single window he could see the familiar chimney-pots of the houses on Commonwealth Avenue that he had watched

from his bed every morning for nearly twenty years. It was all exactly the same, but now it seemed as small as a prison cell. Yet it had a quality of actuality, seemed bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. To touch the iron bed was like touching his own foot. It was the nearest feeling he would ever have of belonging to the soil. Here he belonged.

These thoughts flashed in a single impression across his mind as he entered and began to rummage in the closet for a change of clothes. There was nothing there except the old high-water trousers and the jacket with the abbreviated sleeves that he had worn his freshman year at college, but, like the room, they seemed to be part of himself, and he dragged them forth, tore off his dress suit and put them on. If he could only discard his recent past as easily as he could cast off these trappings of his humiliation. If only by stepping out of these new clothes and donning the old he could rehabilitate his character! He could not shed the skin of degradation, yet this changing of his outer garments was the preliminary to a baptism of sorrow. He was ready now to go to his mother, leaving his shoes at the door of the temple. Racked by grief and bowed by self-abasement, he, nevertheless, as a consequence of this simple act which had somehow taken on a symbolic character, felt himself less contaminated, less defiled. As he descended the stairs he ran his left hand tenderly along the cheap pine balustrade. There on the painted wall beside

him were the finger-prints his tiny hands had made as a child, too numerous to be eradicated. How many times he had seen his mother come out of the door below, at the foot of that flight of stairs, and heard her call up to him: "Tom, are you coming down to see mother!" He choked and the tears blinded him. He was going down to see mother probably for the last time. "Oh, God!" he moaned aloud, "Oh, God! Don't let mother die!"

The door of her room was closed and a new fear seized him. Perhaps—but he thrust his misgivings aside and turned the knob. He had expected to see—what sometimes he had seen before—his mother propped up in bed, surrounded by bottles and basins, looking desperately ill and giving evidences of much physical suffering. Usually on these rare occasions there were one or two old women rocking disconsolately in corners or officiously rendering ambiguous services—Aunt Eliza or some of the cousins. The room had always been overheated and had smelled of alcohol, gruel, and medicines.

Now for a moment he thought that he must be in the wrong room. It was bright with sunlight, and seemed almost empty. The air was cool and fresh. All the knickknacks and useless furniture had been removed. No cardboard remembrances dangled from the gas-jets. Somehow it frightened him to see the room so neat and bare—as if its contents had been or were about to be "put away" forever.

A trained nurse in a stiffly starched dress arose from beside the bed and came toward him, holding a watch in her hand. She gave an almost imperceptible nod, seeming to expect him.

"I will leave you with her," she said simply, and went out.

At first Tom did not recognize his mother. Could that be she—that fragile figure among the pillows —that wisp of thistle-down? Was that small, shrunken, brown face hers? Were those wrinkled cheeks the ones he had kissed as a little child? He took a step nearer. She was upon her back, her thin gray hair lying about her face, her eyes fixed upon some point above his head. Her breath came irregularly. He could hardly see any movement of the coverlid. He sank beside the bed, sought and found her hand amid the sheets.

"Mother!" he whispered, and all the repressed love of twenty years surged into his heart. "Mother! I'm here! Tom!"

The delicate hand tightened upon his, but there came no change upon her face. She was looking at something across the room upon the wall, and her glance never wavered. He wondered that her eyelids did not flicker.

"It's me—Tom!"—he repeated, throttling his grief. "Your—boy!"

He watched her face hungrily for some sign of recognition. What was she looking at with such patient intentness? Did she want something? No, her expression was too full of peace. His eyes

followed hers, toward the same riffles of sunlight upon the ceiling that he had peered at as a child, dancing and melting into one another, to where, below, hung the picture of the Madonna holding the child in her arms, her great eyes, full of a sad and tender mystery, gazing down upon them. Over the door the red worsted motto enjoined him as of old to look and be saved. He turned back again to his mother's face. She was staring at the Madonna as if waiting for her to do something—step down out of the frame perhaps—or to speak. Then presently as if she had seen what she expected to see, a little smile gathered around her lips and she closed her eyes with a tiny sigh of contentment.

As if at an altar-rail, Tom continued to kneel and hold his mother's hand. He was numb with sorrow, overwhelmed and dumb in the presence of approaching death which had already drawn a curtain between his mother and himself. He had come too late! Retribution had fallen upon him.

He could never repay the debt he owed her. She had given her life for him. Sleeping and waking for twenty years he had been her only thought, her only care. She had saved and slaved for him. And what had he done for her in return? He had been ashamed of her! The brutal truth stared him in the face. He had thought of her as old-fashioned, fussy, ill-educated—vulgar almost. He bit his lips and his eyes burned with hot tears. Could she ever have been young and pretty? He had thought her so, as a child. He remembered how firm and

smooth and cool her face had been when she had come up to kiss him good night in the old days. Once she had been twenty like himself, full of strange stirrings and romantic dreams! He winced as he recalled the girlish "pieces" she had played to him upon their jangling old upright piano. And somewhere in a dusty corner was a harp! She had told him of "parties" and "sleigh-rides" that she had participated in as a young lady. Then she had fallen in love with his father, and in anguish had borne him—Tom—to be her idol, her joy—the realization of all her hopes and yearnings. Her universe had centred about him. And now she was dying!

The little body beside him stirred uneasily and a flicker of discomfort passed over her face. Was she suffering? Should he call the nurse? Unutterable anguish possessed him. Still holding her hand, he rose upon one knee and leaned over the bed. Something was troubling her. Her lips moved noiselessly. Was she calling him? Was she at last conscious of his presence? He prayed fervently that she was. The sunlight dimmed for a moment, then blazed forth again. At the same instant Tom experienced a sensation of there being some one else besides his mother in the room—the nurse perhaps. He looked over his shoulder but there was no one there. The nurse had not come back. His mother was twisting now from side to side restlessly, impatiently, but not as if in pain. It was rather as if she wished to speak to some one, but

could not make herself heard. Once she lifted her head and turned it directly sideways.

"Mother!" moaned Tom. "Dear mother!"

But she gave no sign of having heard him. Presently she fell back into her former position with an expression of trust and confidence on her face like that of a happy child.

"Mother!" she murmured gently, as if speaking to some one beside the bed.

She lay still after that for a long time, contented. Tom kneeled again. She had not released his hand, but he knew that it was not of him that she dreamed. She had done her duty by him, had given him her love, and now that she was going home it was her own dear mother of whom she thought, whose hand would lead her safely through the shadows.

"Mother!" she sighed again.

Suddenly she opened her eyes and lifted her head toward the Madonna, staring at her expectantly for a second or two. And then her head fell back upon the pillow and she died.

Tom was aroused by the touch of the nurse's hand upon his shoulder.

"I must ask you to go away for a few minutes," she said.

He arose stupidly. A hurdy-gurdy had begun playing "The Irish Washer-woman" half-way down the block. With a last look at his mother's face he turned to the door. It was over! He had parted from her forever in this world. He was alone. Automatically he felt his way down-stairs

to the kitchen. Bridget was sitting rigidly by the mixing-table in her best clothes. He noticed the tin match-box painted blue hanging from its nail by the clock—the match-box in which Bridget had kept the crumbs to make him wise! Wise indeed! She arose at his step and waited.

"It's—all over!" he whimpered, and threw himself down at the table, his head on his outstretched arms, sobbing violently.

"I killed her!" he groaned harshly. "I killed her!"

The old cook laid her hand on his head.

"No, Tom!" she replied. "Ye did not kill yer mither! Do not accuse yourself of that. Ye neglected her, 'tis thrue enough, but ye did not kill her. She would not like ye to say that! 'Tis women's lot in this world to give and suffer and bear childer. 'Tis their pain and their joy as well. Ye cannot pay yer debt to yer mither, Tom, save to yer own childer, just as, mayhap, she paid her debt to her own mither with her love to you. There's not one of us, Tom, that doesn't owe everything he is to all them other mithers that has gone before us."

He raised his head to her, the tears streaming down his face.

"You're all the mother I've got left, Bridget!" he said.

XXXI

Tom's mother was buried in Mt. Auburn Cemetery on an Indian summer day with big cumulus clouds floating slowly across an expanse of peerless blue. He had lived through the intervening period in a sort of dream, a dream that had had something of delirium in it, for he had caught a severe cold on the train, and had been running a high temperature for several days. Just how he had got through these days he did not know. But they held many surprises for him regarding his mother.

At the funeral in St. Agnes's, the church was crowded with hundreds of people of every social grade who had respected and loved her, and who felt real pity for him now that she was gone. Many wrote him letters of sympathy which showed plainly how little he had really understood or appreciated her. Apparently she had supported, or at least assisted in supporting, dozens of worthy but indigent persons, including widows and aged clergymen, as well as girls and boys trying to secure an education. All this she had done out of an income so attenuated that it could hardly have paid the gas bill of one of Tom's recent friends. He read the letters in bitter contrition of spirit, for these

recipients of her charity had evidently valued her far more than had he.

Yet alone he followed the little coffin up the aisle, and alone he followed it down again, with the words of St. Paul echoing in his ears and thrilling his heart. He had boasted of being a materialist, was, he still told himself, a materialist. But with the rolling of the organ, the mellow light filtering through the stained-glass windows, the scent of the flowers, and the rows of tender faces filling the church, he could not acknowledge that his mother was gone from him forever. Indeed, he felt, curiously, as if she had never been so *living* before; for he saw her in a new aspect as she really had been, as she always would be to these hundreds of beneficiaries, old and young, a protectress of the poor and of the fatherless, beloved by them all despite her homely limitations of speech and manner. How trivial these now seemed to him! That spirit of love that had manifested itself in his mother would never die. The little flower-covered shell that was being carried on ahead of him was not his mother, any more than the steel engraving of the Madonna in her room had been the real Madonna. He could tear the picture up or burn it, but her eyes would remain forever looking down upon him, as he knew they were at that moment, in sweet compassion. There was no analogy in the thought, he knew perfectly well, but in a strange, mysterious, sad, yet half-happy way, the idea of immortality and of the eyes of the Madonna and

his mother were somehow, as he walked with bent head slowly down the aisle, all mixed up together. He didn't feel that his mother was dead at all. He thought of her now as he remembered her as a child, young, with brown hair and smooth cheeks, and with such loving eyes, eyes just like those of the Madonna in the picture. Tom no longer felt alone. He felt that his mother was nearer and dearer to him than ever before—would always be so. In spite of himself, he had found her at last.

There was only a handful of people at the grave to witness the laying to rest of the earthly part of the self-effacing woman who had never in her life been the recipient of so much attention as was being accorded to her now. It was a beautiful spot, overhung with willows and surrounded by golden oaks and scarlet and yellow maples. He noticed that there were some women there—some of his mother's relatives, he supposed—but they stood back upon the path and left him at the grave beside the clergyman, who briefly read the interment service. As the coffin was lowered Tom fully realized for the first time that his mother was actually gone, and he experienced a benumbing sense of his bereavement. He felt an almost uncontrollable desire to throw himself upon the grave and cling passionately to the earth that was about to separate her from him. But his New England heredity restrained him, and tearless, yet with parched throat, he listened quietly until it was over.

Well, his dear mother was at rest at last beside the only other man whom she had loved.

"Thomas Kelly"—his own name. Some day he, too, would be lying in a grassy plot beneath a similar marble stone, marked with these precise words; and perhaps still another Thomas Kelly would be gazing at it! It gave him a strange feeling as if the Thomas Kelly already there were in reality himself, or that, in some part at least, they two were the same person. He stared stupidly at the grave while these and a thousand other thoughts danced in his brain. Presently he was aware that the clergyman was extending his hand and expressing his sympathy. Tom took the hand and mumbled some perfunctory words of thanks in reply. Then the clergyman moved away and Tom was alone at his mother's grave. It was time for him to go and leave her, just as he had always been leaving her, only this time he would not find her waiting for him on his return. There would be only a mound of faded grass and a headstone, like the others—marked "Caroline Maria Kelly." And this thought bred its converse, that now it was not he who was leaving her, but she who was leaving him. He would now suffer as he had made her suffer. Involuntarily he half stretched out his arms toward the grave, then he let them fall, and stood motionless.

He stood thus a long time, so long that the few mourners, who had been present, silently departed, and the grave-diggers moved about uneasily among

the neighboring tree trunks. He seemed to see his mother's eyes looking down upon him from somewhere, or were they those of the Madonna? Did every mother—every woman—have eyes like the Madonna's?

"Tom, dear Tom!"

He felt a light touch upon his arm and discovered those same eyes—full of infinite pity, gazing into his own. Evelyn's!

"Poor Tom! Dear Tom!" she whispered. On her own lashes hung tears of sympathy. He sought her hand and held it.

After a little while she said softly: "You must come away. I know how hard it is, but you must come away." She moved back a few paces, and he sank on his knees beside the grave for the last time. Then he arose resolutely and crossed to where Evelyn stood with her father, and waved aside the hack which had been waiting.

"May I walk along back with you?" he asked. "There's nobody at home now but Bridget."

He smiled a pathetic smile.

Silently they followed the grass-bordered paths of the cemetery until, at length, they came out upon Mt. Auburn Street and could see the River Charles winding among the autumnal reds and yellows of the salt marshes. A couple of gulls flickered high in the air, specks of gleaming white, and a cool, fresh breeze drew in from the unseen harbor. Along the road the big elms bent friendly heads, letting fall a scattering tribute to the coming

frost. There was a bite in the air, the eager nip of the east wind that Tom had known as a boy, and he filled his aching lungs with it in deep breaths. Countless times before had he walked along that very road.

It seemed incredible that he could have been away, even more incredible than that his mother was dead. Both seemed incredible. Yet he knew that he would not find her on his return to the little house on Newbury Street, and he knew, in a way, that what now seemed to him like a strange, oppressive, noxious dream had been an actual experience, not in his own existence, but in that of another and different Thomas Kelly, as distinct as the Thomas Kelly lying behind there in the cemetery beside his mother. He felt physically weak and limp; all confidence had gone from him. He was like a child willing to be led, timid, distrustful of its own ability to think or do for itself.

The shadows were lengthening as they turned up Ash to Brattle Street. At the corner he bade them good night and with set teeth strode on alone staring straight ahead of him. His heart was like lead; his mind a gloomy cavern of regrets. So he stalked on through Harvard Square and down Cambridge Street and out upon Harvard Bridge.

One by one the lamps broke out against the brick sky-line of the Back Bay. He recalled those countless evenings when as a small boy he had lingered out beyond the time allowed, and had returned home to find his mother anxiously await-

ing him. There would be no mother waiting for him now. The little home would be empty—save for its crowded memories. There would not even be a light in the window. Must he go back to that silent house? He bit his lips and hurried on. Yes, he must go back. It was but the beginning of his penance.

It was dark when he reached the Beacon Street side of the bridge, and as he walked along he could look through the lighted windows into comfortable "reception-rooms," "libraries," or "front parlors," where by shaded lamps sat men and women, girls and boys. In some of them he could see the firelight flickering upon the walls. Bitterly he turned away that he might not see the happiness of those inside. If he had been kinder to his mother perhaps she might have still been waiting for him beside just such a fire! That was the thought that pursued him and crushed his heart.

As he neared the house he could hardly persuade his feet to enter. To open the door would be like entering his mother's tomb. For a fleeting moment he had a vague idea of taking the midnight train back to New York, but the thought revolted him. He was through with all that at any rate! He had shaken the dust from his feet. The prodigal had returned—too late perhaps—but still he had returned to his own—to his inheritance, whatever it was. This was his home, shabby, prosaic, but still his home—where he belonged.

Automatically he followed the curbing around

the front grass plot that led to the steps. They seemed to him higher than when he had climbed them as a boy. In the lane of sky between the roofs hung a little crescent moon, the same little moon he had used to see when lying in his mother's arms. He did not feel a day older than when he had thus lain there so happily. Poor mother! Then with an effort he gathered himself together. He could read the name "Kelly" quite plainly by the light of the street-lamp. His name—"Kelly"! That was *he*—"Kelly." This was *his* house, *his* place, *his* earth. "You are now Kelly," the plate seemed to say to him. "Here is where you belong. Here you are exactly what you are and nothing else. No pretense will avail you!"

He pulled the bell, just as his father had done so many thousands of times before him, and heard its faint jangle in the distant recesses of the kitchen. Again he felt that it would be impossible for him to enter that silent, empty house. He would go to a hotel—anywhere, and return in the morning. But the door was almost immediately opened by Bridget.

"There's a gintleman waitin' for ye, Tom," she said expectantly. "He was on the steps whin I come home."

"A gentleman!" repeated Tom, astounded.

"He's from Noo York, he says," the old cook answered. "A frind, he says, and that it will be all right. So I lighted the gas fer him in the parlor!"

There was a strange derby hat lying upon the walnut rack and an unaccustomed silk umbrella in the stand. Tom hurried up the narrow stairs, mechanically avoiding the pie-shaped trap on the landing (which had been the cause of Mrs. Trollop's *débâcle*), and entered the parlor.

Parradym rose to greet him.

"Oh, Parry!" cried Tom, and then he choked. It *was* kind of the old boy to come all the way on to Boston.

"I only heard this morning," he explained, taking Tom's hand, "or I should have come before. I thought you might be a bit lonely and that if I could be of any help——"

Tom perceived that there were tears in the old bachelor's eyes. Good old Parradym! How he had misjudged him! Hardly conscious of his act, Tom put both arms around his friend and laid his head on his shoulder.

"Oh, Parry!" he repeated over and over again. "Why did I ever leave her?"

The older man patted him on the head.

"I did the same thing. Every man does. And some day each of us drinks the waters of repentance just as you are doing now. You're not the only man, Tom, that has neglected somebody who loved you—even if that is small consolation. You'll pay your debt to her to some one else, your debt of honor."

As Tom made ready for supper it occurred to him that only a few people—a dozen or so friends like

Allyn—knew the real Parradym. The rest of the world accepted the old fellow for a selfish parasite, not suspecting that that bland, noncommittal exterior concealed a generous, kindly, sympathetic nature. There weren't many men who would do that kind of thing for a friend! How easy it would have been for Parry to have sent him a telegram and let it go at that. Yet he had not waited, had come on the impulse to stand by a lonely boy to whom he owed nothing and from whom he could expect nothing in return.

In the Kelly dining-room at the old black walnut table, surrounded by the dying stags upon the walls, Parradym and Tom ate supper together, waited on by faithful Bridget. It was the same sort of supper that Tom had always eaten in that room, and it brought back to him vividly his mother's absence. He had never before sat there without her. Cold meat, baked potatoes, sliced bread, cake, apple sauce, and cocoa, even the "animal crackers," from the remote corner of the biscuit-box, were there in their particular plate.

"Animal crackers!" murmured Parradym, "I haven't had one for twenty years!"—and he helped himself to a hippopotamus with as much gratification as was proper under the circumstances.

Before the end of the meal Tom had persuaded Parradym to stay on with him at least for the present, for the thought of continuing to live there in the house, alone save for Bridget, was intolerable, and accordingly a messenger boy was despatched

to the station for the bachelor's hand-luggage. Then before the sea-coal fire in the library, where Tom had sat every evening at his lessons when a boy, the two smoked and talked. Every corner of the room held some recollection for Tom. There stood the grotesque statuette of Daniel Webster against which at the age of four he had fallen and bruised his eye; here was the very spot on the table where his father had accidentally burned the green baize cloth with his cigar. There was the old clam-shell ash-receiver with the two black comic figures done in silhouette; here the mouse-hole once inhabited by a small rodent addicted to the delectable binding of the Encyclopedia Britannica.

Parradym examined the rows of books—with critical interest.

"Your father must have been a bookish man, Tom," he said at length. "I haven't seen as well selected a lot of volumes in some time. I fancy you haven't either. I'm sure old Selby didn't have any weakness for Walter Pater, at any rate he didn't disclose it to me. I wouldn't exchange my own taste for books for anything else in life. I should say you had a pretty fine heritage."

Tom shook his head dejectedly.

"I sold my birthright for a mess of pottage," he answered. "I'm just a rotter. I don't think my mother suspected it though, that's one comfort. But you know it and I know it, everybody else knows it. And nothing I can do now can ever make up for what I've done!"

Parradym did not laugh or even smile, but laid his hand affectionately on Tom's knee and said:

"I know how you feel. I don't blame you. I shouldn't think half as much of you if you didn't. But you're all wrong, lad! To me you're nothing more than a child, a child who's taken a fall or two in learning to walk, and who hasn't entirely learned how to walk yet. Life's all before you! If only I were twenty-two again! How I envy you! Envy your sorrows, your disappointments, your failures—as well as your joys, your achievements, your successes. Envy you the love of the girl who will some day help you to pay the debt you owe to your mother and to the rest of mankind, and make you the home I haven't got."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"If you were *my* age, you young jackanape, you might have some excuse to grumble, but at yours ——!"

"But—" expostulated Tom, "do you think any decent girl would marry me if she knew what a cad I'd been?"

Then Parradym smiled.

XXXII

OLD Squire Mason's law office was at the top of a dark and winding flight of stairs in Barrister's Hall. Tom had been there as a child with his father and had dim recollections of bookcases with glass doors lined with green silk, a little bronze paperweight in the shape of a horse, and a very old man with a parchment-like face behind a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles. The morning that he went to Barrister's Hall to ascertain the extent of his mother's estate he found nothing changed in the fifteen years since he had last visited the lawyer's office. Squire Mason was sitting now just where he had been sitting then, his nose buried in a pile of papers.

"Oh—come in!" he wheezed, squinting at Tom. "Tom Kelly? Of course. Sit down. About your mother's will, I assume?"

"Yes, sir," answered Tom, feeling like a very small boy, and hardly daring to sit down, which he finally did in a corner.

Squire Mason removed and wiped his spectacles and then unfolded a foolscap paper which he removed from a pile of similar papers surrounded by a piece of broad green tape.

"Your mother was a very remarkable woman!"

he announced suddenly and rather severely. "I never understood how she managed to get along on her income. Under your father's will she had a perfect right to spend the principal of the trust he created for her, but she never would. On the contrary, she not only gave away a great deal but managed to save quite a little sum."

"I hope she had everything she wanted," said Tom in reply.

"Her only thought was *for you*," answered the old lawyer. "She didn't need much for herself, and she wanted less. All she wished was to keep a home for you and give you the best education she could. I hope you deserved it."

"I didn't!" Tom confessed. "I didn't appreciate her."

"Um!" remarked Squire Mason, looking sideways at Tom and seeming to take slightly more interest in him, for he added in a kindlier tone: "You could hardly be expected to appreciate fully all the sacrifices she made for you—at your age. I shall not offer her will for probate—for you are her only heir at law and next of kin, and your father's will is, of course, already a matter of record. She left you everything she had saved—a little over three thousand dollars."

He turned squarely at Tom.

"Now, don't make a fool of yourself and throw this money away!" he said gruffly.

Tom let his eyes fall before Squire Mason's searching gaze.

"The money is mine?" he asked hesitatingly. "To do exactly as I want to with?"

"Certainly—of course it is."

"And you are my lawyer—just as you were hers?" asked Tom.

"Why, yes, I suppose so."

Squire Mason pushed his spectacles up over his forehead and peered curiously at the lad from beneath them.

"Then," announced Tom, "as my lawyer I want you to send a check for three thousand dollars to Joseph Wertheim, of the firm of Wertheim & Wertheim, at the Waldorf Astoria, New York."

Squire Mason's face grew grim.

"Been gambling?"

His jaws closed with a snap. Tom nodded.

"Yes, but not exactly the way you think. It's an account I think my mother would want me to wipe off," he said quietly.

During the next few days Tom passed many sad and lonely hours going over the contents the Newbury Street house, deciding what he s destroy or give away, and what he should k . Parradym, appreciating that this was a task whi no one could do for his friend, absented hims on long walks, leaving Tom to perform those duti which took on almost the character of sacred righ There was his mother's little wooden desk, for i stance. For a long time he could not bring himself to touch it, full as he knew it to be of tokens of her care and affection. Yet, at last, one brig

morning after Parradym had gone out, he entered his mother's bedroom, and under the eyes of the steel-engraved Madonna, unlocked the desk and one by one pulled out the drawers. His eyes filled with tears of contrition as he discovered in neat little packages every letter that he had ever written to her, beginning with one in his fourth year addressed "Darling mummer" and signed "Tom" with a tiny "t" and a very big "m" that trailed off in zigzags down the page. Again and again as he came upon the evidences of her love—the little keepsakes he had given her, his first little pair of white kid shoes, his childish "knitting" done through a spool, a marble or two (perhaps the very ones his father had picked up the day of his birth), a small rubber doll, he laid his head down upon his arms, and gave way utterly to his grief.

When it was accomplished he left the chamber with a new realization of the sacred character of his mother's devotion. He perceived the real depth of her instinctive religious feeling, however illogical and petty some of its outward expressions might have been—the truth of her homely, oft-repeated phrase that she would rather have him "good" than "great." Grimly he told himself that he would never be either, and yet, nevertheless, already felt himself stronger for her unseen influence.

As he raised his eyes to those of the Madonna above his head, before crossing the threshold for the last time, he caught sight of the old worsted motto

bearing the well-remembered legend of "Look unto me and be ye saved." How often as a child, as a boy, and later as a man he had asked himself what there was to be saved from. Now he knew. His mother's death had taught him the depth of her self-sacrifice, had saved him from the complete consequences of his own selfishness. Again there came to him the thought that had hovered in his brain that feverish morning four years before as he lay in bed after his episode with Peters, that some people were perhaps saved by music, and some by the thought of their mothers, and some by the love of Jesus Christ, and that after all perhaps it was all a part of the same thing. He had been saved, he knew that; and he knew also that it was by her love alone that he had been saved, a love that was nothing less than divine, the love that is the gift of the Madonna to all mothers and is the salvation of men.

"That was my room!" said Tom, pointing out to Parradym the entry of Thayer's Hall, upon the steps of which he had loitered during so many comparatively recent hours. "Those two windows on the left."

A lank youth was sitting upon the cushioned sill, his legs propped against the wall, smoking a long meerschaum pipe. He had a book upon his knees, but his gaze was concentrated upon a couple of very busy gray squirrels who were scampering around the grass under the nearest elm. Tom felt

a pang of jealousy at the sight of this other chap who now occupied the room where he had frittered away his time in idle ease. They had walked out one afternoon from Boston, for Parradym was also, a Harvard man and had expressed a desire to revisit the scenes of his youth.

"Wonderful period—college life!" sighed Parradym.

"I wish I thought so," replied Tom sincerely. "I know that I got precious little out of it. First I was sore because I thought I was left out of everything, and didn't have sense enough to know that the reason was because I ought to have been left out. Then I got 'in' by accident and it went to my head. If I hadn't got in I might have discovered what it was that kept me out and taken pains to change."

Parradym chuckled:

"Well, you seem to have found out!" he said good-naturedly.

"At a price!"

"It's a lesson well worth the cost, isn't it?"

Tom uttered an expression of disgust.

"When I think of the opportunities I chucked away——"

"My dear boy! That's precisely what you came here for, wasn't it? You've learned that they *were* 'opportunities.' You can't expect to learn everything out of books! Some people claim that you can't learn *anything* out of them. The opportunities are still yours. You haven't even begun

to get ready for the battle of life. By the way, what are you going to do, anyhow?"

They had crossed Harvard Street and could see Dane Hall, the building devoted to the Harvard Law School.

"I don't know," answered Tom slowly. "I don't feel as if I were good for anything. I haven't said much about it, but, frankly, it makes me sick to think of myself!"

"Come! Come!" retorted Parradym almost angrily. "That's no way to talk. What do you suppose your mother would want you to be?"

"A lawyer—like my father," admitted Tom.

"Well—?" hazarded Parradym.

At that moment the tall form of Professor Russell appeared swinging across from Jarvis Field, and as he approached he waved at them.

"Hello!" he called. "We were speaking of you only to-day. Are you thinking of entering the law school this autumn? If you are, you ought to register."

Tom presented Parradym and the three strolled along Harvard School together.

"Kelly has an idea that he fooled so much at college that he isn't fit to undertake a serious job like studying law," suggested the bachelor.

"Rot!" replied Russell. "There's a curious thing we all notice out here, and that is that once a man enters a professional school he sloughs off all the foolishness that characterized him in college and gets right down to business. In fact the chaps

that were the laziest in college often make the hardest grinds afterward—particularly in the law school. Perhaps it's because they're not all worked out before they get there. Everybody works. If I had a son I believe I'd send him there just as a piece of mental discipline. I don't know a surer index of ability than to get an "A" at the law school over there.

"Besides, if a fellow hasn't done his best perhaps he ought to try and show that he's got the stuff in him after all," added the philosopher.

"Come and see us soon!" said Russell. "I've got a lecture." He nodded and turned down a path while Tom and Parradym continued on.

"Wonderful face that fellow has!" remarked Parradym, looking after him.

"If I had only had sense enough to appreciate what he told me in my freshman year I wouldn't have been the fool I have," admitted Tom.

"Don't be too hard on yourself," commented Parradym. "Experience is the best and, generally, the only teacher. You're not so different from other fellows of your age."

The afternoon sun had turned the yellow leaves of the elms about Memorial Hall to glittering gold as they mounted the steps and entered the cool and shadowy transept. On every side Tom could read inscribed in marble the names of the Harvard men who had died for the cause of Liberty in 1861. How many times he had hurried by unthinkingly in his early college days! The names had seemed

then only a part of the mural decorations of the great refectory. Now they had a deep significance. These men had paid their "debt of honor" with their youth, had unhesitatingly thrown away their lives to perpetuate the ideals of the college that they loved. Silent, he removed his hat and Parradym did the same.

"For us!" murmured Parradym.

They climbed into the gallery and looked down upon the silent hall with its row upon row of empty tables, deserted save for a solitary scrub-woman. Through the great windows poured the autumn sunlight, softening the features of those other Harvard men whose portraits hung upon the walls, uniformed officers of the Revolution and the Civil War, judges in their robes of office, high-stocked dignitaries of an olden time, students, professors, former presidents of the college—sober, stern, solemn most of them but worthy sons of a great mother.

"A fine lot," said Parradym. "They believed in something, and they lived up to their belief."

They slowly retraced their steps across the Yard past Holworthy Hall, Hollis, Stoughton, and Massachusetts, and in the square they separated, Parradym to walk back to Boston, and Tom to look for Francis True whom he had not seen since the spring. He did not know where his friend was now living, but opposite his name in the college catalogue was a near-by address upon Brattle Street with the information that he was studying music in the graduate school. Tom found the number upon a

white gate in front of an old colonial house withdrawn from the street at the end of a leaf-strewn lawn, and as he approached the half-open door he could hear the sound of a piano. In the plaintive, fluttering notes he recognized Nevin's "Autumn"—one of Frank's favorite pieces. It was played so wistfully that Tom wondered. Frank had always been gladness personified. The piano stopped and Tom stepped across the threshold.

"Oh—Frank!" he called.

There was a sound of awkward footsteps and a door opened above.

"Hello! Who is it?" came Frank's voice.

"Me! Tom Kelly!"

Frank gave a cry of delight.

"Come up! Come up!" he shouted, "I'm terribly glad to see you!"

Tom leaped up the stairs and grabbed his friend's hand.

"You've moved—you old sinner!" he said. "I had to look you up in the catalogue!"

"Yes," answered Frank. "I'm taking an advanced course in music. It's what I really care for, you know. I haven't much else."

He smiled faintly.

Tom looked at him quickly. The words had been uttered quite unconsciously, were not a bid for sympathy, but for Tom they unexpectedly opened wide the doors of hope, doors which he believed to be tightly locked. He did not, however, immediately follow the lead thus given. He had to ad-

just himself to this new idea—that Frank had *nothing* but his music. He had always supposed that Frank would some day marry Evelyn. Certainly she had always shown him the greatest favor. There was no doubt about their friendship, and then that night—Class Day— There was something he evidently did not understand. By and by he came back to it.

"But Frank," he said, "aren't you going to marry Evelyn?"

Frank stopped in the act of poking the fire and looked at Tom with a half-surprised expression.

"No," he replied simply. "She doesn't care for me—in that way."

"But, Frank!" expostulated Tom, "surely *you*—*you*——"

"Oh, the trouble isn't with me!" answered Frank in matter-of-fact tones. "She simply doesn't love me, that's all. Besides, I should never ask her, I couldn't ask her to marry me with—my deformity—even if she loved me, which she doesn't."

It was the first reference he had ever made to Tom concerning his infirmity, and the last.

He looked out of the window for a moment at the sunlight checkered rustling leaves, then turned to Tom with a smile:

"You're the only one she's ever cared about, old fellow. Ask her and see for yourself."

Such generous loyalty, in contrast to his own former attitude, made Tom ashamed.

"You're a brick, Frank!" he exclaimed impul-

sively. "Perhaps you're mistaken. Are you sure?"

"She doesn't love me," Frank repeated. "That's all there is to it. Now, Tom, go to it—with my blessing."

He laughed cheerfully and made a gesture of benediction.

"I'm not fit to ask her," answered Tom, hanging his head.

"Nobody is!" said Frank. "By the way, where are you going to live this winter?"

"I don't know," answered Tom. "I can't stay in the Newbury Street house all alone."

Frank turned to him eagerly.

"See here, Tom!" he cried. "Why don't you come and hang out with me here? I've got an extra bedroom, and there aren't any other roomers. We could have things all to ourselves. It would be simply bully if you would. And—and—Tom! I'm lonely!"

Tom put his arm about Frank's shoulders. Since his mother's death he was easily moved.

"So am I, Frank!" he said. "If you can stand me, I'll come with pleasure! When shall it be? Next week?"

"The sooner the better!" exclaimed Frank.

"Next week, then! And Bridget shall come along and take care of us!" exclaimed Tom. "And now I've got to beat it! Hello! It's nearly five o'clock! I'm afraid I'll be late to my appointment!"

The fictional appointment was the offspring of Frank's unexpected disclosure about Evelyn. Up to that moment the consciousness of his regeneration had merely mitigated the loathing which he entertained for his past conduct and encouraged him to feel that so far as the present was concerned he might look his fellow men in the face. He had been yanked back from the edge of the cliff, pulled together and set on his feet. So far, he had been simply like a drugged person resuscitated and brought to his senses. But now he felt the leap of the blood in his veins and knew he was really alive again, and the song of the birds was sweet in his ears and the sunlit air filled him with a joyous intoxication. Life held something to live for. The greatest prize of all might still be his, unless, forsooth, he deliberately tossed it aside as he had before. Blind bat that he had been! What were Lulie and Pauline—he squirmed internally—beside her? He mustn't lose a minute in making up the time he had lost. His heart knocked almost as loudly against his ribs as did his knuckles upon the door of the little house on Appian Way.

"Come in!"

Evelyn was sitting alone by the window in the miniature library, sewing. She looked exactly as she had the first night he had seen her there in his freshman year, only a shade more mature perhaps. Had she heard anything? Had some officious friend casually dropped any calculated innuendoes about his affairs of the past summer? In any case,

she should know him for exactly what he was. He would keep back nothing. She looked up, smiling as he entered, and held out her hand.

"Hello, Tom! Awfully glad to see you. Dad's out. Of course, come in just the same. You might even have a pipe."

Tom started to raise her hand to his lips, then changed his mind and pressed it instead.

"Thanks," he answered awkwardly, perceiving that his task was going to be no easy one. "I didn't come to see your father. I came to see you."

"That's good," she laughed. "Well, here I am, just where I've always been."

He looked quickly at her to see if the remark held any particular significance for him, but apparently she had not so intended. He sat down in the old leather chair and gazed at her helplessly. What a delightful picture she made with her head bowed over her work! How utterly different she was from the girls he had known at Newport! But it was very difficult to tell her so. Several minutes they sat thus in silence, save for the snapping of the coal in the fireplace and the heavy breathing of the old collie on the rag rug in front of it. Then Evelyn raised her eyes and laid her sewing in her lap.

"Well, Tom," she said, "it's nice to have you back with us again."

He tried to speak, stammered and gave it up. While she might not think such a terrible lot of him, nevertheless, she had no idea what a cad he

had been. He had her good-will—at any rate, and it was hard to utter the words which might alter it to disgust. He shook his head mutely and his lids dropped as if made of lead, heavy as his heart. He was thinking of his last interview with Lulie and the recollection of it was like a bad taste in his mouth. Could he ask a decent girl to care for him after the way he had demeaned himself? And Pauline! He sat there stultified with abasement. Perhaps it was just as well for his character that the excuses of inexperience, youth, and loneliness did not suggest themselves to him. He felt only his degradation. And now that he realized that he had never really cared for any one but Evelyn —that what he had taken for or was willing to accept as a substitute for love had been nothing but the imaginings of a brain poisoned by the atmosphere in which he had been thrown—it seemed incredible that he could have ever allowed her sweet image to have been effaced from his mind. He made a disconsolate picture as he sat there struggling with his desire to tell her everything and beg for her forgiveness and his reluctance to destroy her confidence in him.

Evelyn saw how troubled he was and made an effort to put him at ease.

"Poor Tom!" she said gently. "How hard it has all been for you!"

He groaned and covered his face with his h ıds.

"Oh, Evelyn! If you only knew what a b‹ I've been, you might never speak to me again!"

"Why, Tom!" she protested. "How can you say such a thing!"

"Listen!" he burst out suddenly through his teeth. "You don't know me. I'm an entirely different sort of chap from what you think. I've been a miserable, low-down cad!"

She raised troubled brows to him over her sewing.

"Oh, Tom!" she answered. "You have been so brave. I'm sure you do yourself an injustice."

"No!" he insisted, now ready for the plunge. "I've been a wretched coward, a reckless fool, and—and worse! I've got to tell you, Evelyn! Don't stop me! I couldn't go on living unless you knew!"

She turned her face again to her work, and there was a slight flush above her collar and around the roots of her hair.

"What I'm going to tell you may seem strange after the way I acted on Class Day!" he hurried on shamefacedly. "I don't know what possessed me that night. I hope you have forgiven me!"

She smiled, and her smile was everywhere at once, in her eyes, her dimple, and her hair.

"Are you taking back what you said?" she inquired innocently.

"No," he replied. "I'm merely asking you to let me have a chance before you give me an answer."

"You didn't deserve any answer—then!" she

replied, looking away from him. "You didn't know me—any more than you say I know you. To you I was just a pencil sketch of a girl in pink ribbons with a pair of black eyes, a violin-case, and a collie dog!"

A look of appreciation broke over his face.

"It's rather a queer thing to say," he admitted slowly, "but, Evelyn, I really believe you're right! I never got below the surface of anything—even you! I was a sort of original Peter Bell—to whom a primrose on the river's brim was just a primrose and nothing else. Somehow, I think you know me better than I supposed!"

His laugh was rueful, but it was a laugh none the less.

"Anyhow, it's all right as long as you can laugh about it," she consoled him. "I think a laugh—on oneself," her voice lowered, "is the best evidence of a clear conscience. So to that extent you're all right."

Another silence followed, comfortable; without constraint. Then Tom said:

"Some day I'm going to put that question to you again and insist on an answer. But I couldn't do it unless I made a clean breast of everything. I've got to begin all over again, and I've come to ask you to help me. I thought that what was between us wasn't the thing to tell a girl. It wasn't—to the pink-ribbon—violin-case—kind. But it's different with you, Evelyn. Somehow, I feel as if I couldn't hide anything from you anyway. So

here goes. I'm going to get the whole rotten business off my chest!"

"Have you so much to say to me?" she asked, a note of timidity in her voice.

"Indeed I have!" he retorted passionately. He had made up his mind to bare his soul to her, to leave nothing unconfessed, to start clean and fair. "But I want to say something at the start, not by way of defense but of explanation. You see, I never had anything definite to steer by. I couldn't stand the old-fashioned kind of religion that my mother taught me. It didn't ring true to me. And nobody offered me a satisfactory substitute. So I've just drifted along any old way. I've been weak and silly, a conceited ass without anything to be conceited about, and, because I thought you cared for some one else, I just let myself go——"

"You mean Frank?" she asked.

"Yes. I always supposed you were in love with him."

She shook her head.

"He's a dear friend, but I've never loved him," she said, looking frankly at Tom.

"If I'd only known that," he sighed, "everything would have been different. But I didn't! Oh, Evelyn! I don't know how to begin, but I've come to tell you the whole story and I'm going through with it; that is, if you'll let me?" he added submissively.

She did not refuse. Her curiosity would have impelled acquiescence in his request, if nothing else.

But there was something else—of which she had always been conscious from their first accidental meeting in the Yard, the something else that no science or philosophy can explain.

"I am listening, Tom," she said half to herself.

He pulled his chair nearer to her and, with his eyes fixed intently on her face, brokenly made his confession. Doggedly he recited his ignominious experience at Newport, including every detail of his affairs with Lulie and Pauline, every low and mercenary thought that he had entertained, every callous neglect of his mother. It was a crude—a preposterous—an extraordinary performance. And it was a hard position for a girl to find herself in. Gradually Tom's face grew drawn, almost haggard. But he went stubbornly on until there was nothing left to tell, and when it was over he wiped the beads of perspiration from his forehead with his fingers, closed his eyes, and gave a great, shuddering sigh of relief.

He was thankful to her for letting him sit there, motionless, head thrown back, as long as he liked. Presently he opened his eyes, got up, and stood before her.

"Now I'm ready to begin to try to make good," he said. As he spoke, he saw her move a fraction of an inch in his direction, saw her breast rise and fall a little quicker for the quickening of her breath. Could Frank's assurance—that Evelyn cared for him—possibly be true? This was no time to ask her, anyhow, just after he had told her all about

himself—shown himself up for a whited sepulchre. She was simply disgusted with him, probably.

"Will you help me?" he asked.

She rose to her feet and he took her hand. To his surprise, he felt that she was trembling.

"Of course!" she said, looking him full in the face. "Tom! You're not a coward, you're a brave boy!"

He shook his head impatiently.

"No," he protested, "I'm not. I had to tell you, don't you see? There wouldn't have been any use trying to be different—unless you *knew* I was different."

He still held her hand. She had not drawn it away, and he could see a mist gathering in her eyes. A strange, wonderful, ecstatic feeling pervaded him—almost made him dizzy. He too was trembling. He lifted her hand and kissed it.

"If it wasn't for you—dear," he whispered, "I couldn't try. There'd be nothing to make it worth while. But if—if some day—after I've left the law school—after I've made good—there'd be a chance—ever so small—of your saying yes to that question I asked you—then, why then——"

He stopped amazed, for her lips were quivering and the flush in her cheeks had deepened to a mantle of dark red.

"*Then?*" she smiled through tear-hung lashes. "Only then?"

"*Evelyn!*" he cried with a great leap of the heart, still unbelieving, and drew her to him.

"Evelyn!" he repeated, gathering her in his arms and pressing his lips to the hair above her forehead. "Dearest girl! I need you *now!*"

She laid her head on his shoulder and he could feel the fluttering of her heart against his.

"Oh, Tom!" she sighed, closing her eyes—"I think you do!"

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